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Uprooted

KANTI B. PAKRASI

Designed to develop an analytical understanding of the refugee problem and its consequences from sociological standpoint this book deals with the displaced persons of West Bengal, the offspring of Partition. The refugees and their family organisations—as they were most distressfully exposed to an unprecedented crisis—constitute the foci of the present sociological study. With special reference to social attributes like kinship orientation, caste affiliation, class (occupational) identity and migrational status the study examines thoroughly crisis behaviour of the uprooted families and persons. The book is loaded with many significant facts and figures about the refugees and those would be of great practical value in pursuing healthy welfare measures for proper relief and rehabilitation of the people concerned. Social scientists, administrators, social planners and students of anthropology and sociology will benefit greatly from Dr. Pakrasi's lucid and informative work.

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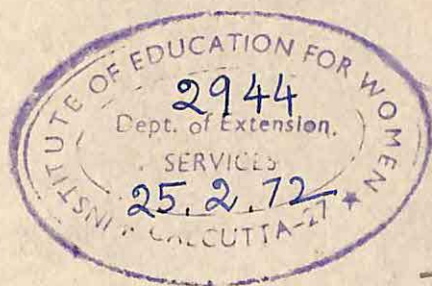
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THE UPROOTED

*A Sociological Study of the Refugees of
West Bengal, India*

Kanti B. Pakrasi



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A Sociological Study of the Refugees of
West Bengal, India

1971

Kamini B. Ghatak

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FOREWORD

An urgent need of the country at large has greatly been served by Dr. Kanti B. Pakrasi in bringing out the befitting book on the refugee population of West Bengal, an offspring of Partition of the ancient land of India. The book dwells very competently on several important sociocultural aspects of the displaced persons from erstwhile East Bengal. The contents of the treatise throw floodlight on the nature of crisis behaviour of the uprooted people concerned from a sociological point of view. Displaced groups and their family organisations—as they were distressfully affected by certain painful disastrous consequences in post-partition period—happen to be the foci of research.

In attempting the present study Dr. Pakrasi has tackled scientifically a few of the basic sociological questions on the basis of a voluminous field-data collected immediately after the event of Partition all over West Bengal in 1948 by the Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta. The questions may be expounded as follows: (i) What might be expected in the behaviour of the people who are all of a sudden forcibly ejected for ever from their ancestral homes? (ii) What might be thought of about the behaviour of the uprooted individuals in response to an unprecedented crisis on family, caste, or class levels? To what extent the codes of conduct governing duties, obligations, privileges, and restrictions of kinship, family and other sociocultural groups in the Hindu society as a whole would continue to play appropriate role in preserving as well as defending necessary integration, order and cohesion among any crisis-stricken, uprooted families concerned?

It is quite interesting to gather from the present research-study that under the stressful circumstances engendered simultaneously by Partition, tremendous influx of the minorities, communal frenzy, moral abjection and cruel bloodshed the uprooted persons from the new Muslim State of East Pakistan did evince extended (joint) family organisations in their post-migrational life and living in West Bengal. However strong and devastating might be the crisis and stress attended upon it in late 1940s the evicted families did not succumb fully or abidingly to the forces of disruption and destruction—social, cultural or economic—to sacrifice their kinship integrity and family ties in producing an unusual number of discrete, forlorn individuals in the absorbing

society of West Bengal. Notwithstanding the threatening impact of the worst national calamity of the contemporary period they were, indeed, extraordinarily capable to sustain familial life and living in more than ninety percent cases immediately after their transplantation in a new society of this State. This phenomenon underlies very significantly the strong persistence of the unique strength of the traditional Hindu kinship system which encompasses the entire range of inter-familial duties, privileges, security, defence and other essential prerogatives.

I would like to note especially that in the given crisis hours both the nuclear (simple) and non-nuclear extended (joint) family units amongst the refugees from East Pakistan acted definitely in equal strength towards certain desirable direction in mediating individual migrant and the forces of social disruption around them and in this regard the factors of caste and occupational class functioned judiciously to make every act of mediation a real success. Otherwise we should have experienced a most dismal and shattered organisation and behaviour of the constituent family units comprising the uprooted population in question. Inter- and intra-familial cohesion did persist in conformity with the prevailing social norm and cultural expectation in such strong manner that every scope of disintegration and derangement was averted to an amazing extent. The study shows that even in an unusual crisis situation the importance of family—be it nuclear or joint—remained paramount among the refugee-migrants and as such we are to accept the proposition that in Indian context both the nuclear and the extended (joint) family organisations must deserve equal interest and parallel weight as 'significant focus' of any study of families under stress.

The present study is, indeed, a successful outcome of a penetrating sociological research on the 'problem group' of the refugees of West Bengal. This is primarily intended to give a fair account of the *causes* for which this problem group has emerged and the *social effects* of the forced and permanent shift of the population under study. The effects have particularly been examined with respect to post-migrational family structures of the uprooted within their caste- and class-organisations. Caste or class-wise variations in the sustained pattern of family life of the migrants have meticulously been examined by Dr. Pakrasi to emphasise the differential behaviour of the refugees concerned. The most enduring and intimate character of the primary social unit of family has been well highlighted in this study of a crisis-

stricken social group. The present research work of Dr. Pakrasi is highly commendable as an exemplary piece of applied research in family sociology.

Family behaviour in a stressful situation has been aptly spelt out and it is very clearly understood that in the given stress most of the evicted Bengali Hindus and other non-Muslims did neither migrate in volumes out of their ancestral homes nor make themselves suitably anchored in the absorbing society of West Bengal with loosely-knit families, dislocated caste-affinities or mutilated class-alignments. In the disastrous circumstances collective responsibility for the family as a whole did shape the actions of the family members—both elder and younger—to defend one another in such constructive way that family integrity and kinship cohesion could satisfactorily survive in large majority cases. The paramount importance of family to morale and to the success of coordinated behaviour of the constituent members has very strongly been confirmed by the present study. It seems, thus, reasonable to generalise that under the given social catastrophe the members of the uprooted families performed their respective family roles most rationally as a responsible social being. And in doing so they remained definitely highly conscious *not* to make themselves totally vulnerable to impending stresses and disorganisations attended upon the same, rather they continued to uphold the distinct trend of *familism*, the key-note of social existence.

Family's own source of strength, resistance and vulnerability to acute crisis have very rightly been pinpointed in the study of the refugee population and families of our country. The central emphasis as laid down to highlight the sociology of the refugee-migrants at stress is immediately appreciated. I am sure that the research findings and the relevant conclusions derived from the same would be of immense value in formulating a correct social policy of relief and rehabilitation in particular and of suitable *assimilation* of the refugees within the absorbing society at large of West Bengal in general. *The Uprooted* should be profitably utilised by our social planners, administrators and social researchers alike to honour a *human approach* towards the refugees, the victims of the historical event of Partition of the ancient land of India.

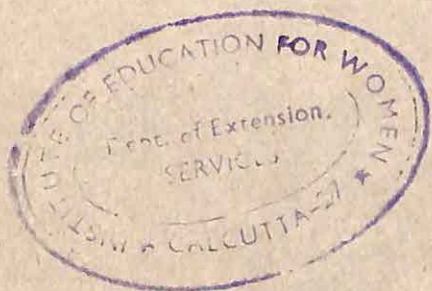
In short, it can be said that the socio-statistical analysis, developed by Dr. Pakrasi in a fascicle pen from his experiences, provides, indeed, a panoramic view of the refugees and their problems. It covers some of the highlights of the refugees since

the turn of Indian Independence (1947), touching the scientific aspects and their practical applications. The book is a long, rich, cleanly voiced monologue, packed with information and written with awareness of history as a complex, ongoing process of change and development.

Calcutta,
15th April, 1971

MINENDRA NATH BASU
Professor and Head of the Department of
Anthropology, Calcutta University.

To
Professor P. C. Mahalanobis



PREAMBLE

The present study on the displaced persons of West Bengal was the outcome of my research assignment in the Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta. Actual examination of the data related to the uprooted persons and families was taken up in 1961-62. Sociological examination of 'family as a societal unit' in Indian setting was the prime concern and in this context empirical data which were already collected in certain large-scale sample surveys by the Institute were utilised for carrying out relevant research projects.

Of these large-scale surveys, the socio-economic survey in *undivided* Bengal (1947) deserves special mentioning. This survey was made to enquire into the economic condition of the rural population of *undivided* Bengal. Data available from the survey were studied thoroughly to build up a detailed classification of family structures for rural people of pre-partitioned Bengal as a whole. The study was useful to indicate *for the first time* on comprehensive scale the nature of family organisations of the rural people, especially of the Hindus, of the province. The findings of the study have been employed in the present discourse in carrying out some comparative examinations of the patterns of family organisations which existed among the Hindus concerned immediately *before* and *after* the Partition of Bengal. My initial study (1962) with the family data available from the said socio-economic survey in rural Bengal (1947) dealt precisely with the nature of differences in the organisation of kinship ties among the constituent members of the families concerned of the present day West Bengal and former East Bengal.

Secondly, a sample survey of the displaced persons (refugees) in West Bengal was conducted by the Institute in the middle of 1948 at the instance of the Government of India. To enquire into social and economic condition of the refugees this survey was made to cover a sizable sample of the displaced population (17,436 household units). Firsthand, comprehensive report on the interesting results available from this survey was brought out long ago from the Institute by Shri N. C. Chakravarti in 1949.

The Partition of India precipitated a *crisis* in the life and

living of the Hindus and other non-Muslim minorities of Pakistan. They were forcibly evicted out of their individual natal villages and places of regular residence under bitterest communal persecutions and violence. They migrated in volumes to flee from the land of terror and uncertainty. They poured in ever-increasing magnitude within several States of Indian Union to join their co-religionists, relatives, friends and sympathisers. They had lost all they had and in many cases 'had been cut off from their own family members without knowledge of what had become of them'. The refugees appeared in India with a frightened, frustrated, dislocated and confused mind and expectation.

In this distressing situation it was hardly known how the immigrants from East Pakistan behaved to be held together in individual family level (in consonance with their caste-affiliations and social origin) by their inner kin-bonds immediately after forced displacement from their previous places of ancestral or regular residence. Precisely with this *problem* in view the relevant data on the displaced persons of West Bengal (1947-48) were taken up to investigate sociologically the salient characteristics of their family structures.

Three research papers of the author (1965, 1966 and 1967) contained in main the principal findings of relevant sociological analyses of the characteristics of the families of refugee-migrants in contrast to those of non-migrants of West Bengal. These analyses help to expose differential *social behaviour* of the evicted people, especially in terms of (i) their propensity for migration beyond East Pakistan and within West Bengal, and again, (ii) their disposition towards organisation of family structures in the immediate post-migrational period. Their social behaviour governing family organisation has moreover been examined in consonance with their caste-relationship and pre-migrational occupational attachment. This sort of sociological investigation into the life and living of the refugee population of the country has so far rarely been attempted.

With these preliminary studies at hand the author felt the urge to develop a comprehensive exposure of the circumstances in which the Hindus and other non-Muslim minorities of erstwhile East Bengal became overnight 'refugees,' losing all social and economic attachments with their respective neighbours, ancestral shrines, and land. Moreover, several brilliant studies on both international and national refugee problems by the authors like Sir John Hope-Simpson, Jaques Vernant,

M. J. Proudfoot, H. B. M. Murphy, Gardner Murphy, R. N. Saksena, N. C. Chakravarti, R. K. Mukherjee enthused me greatly to build up a more organised study of the refugees of West Bengal from sociological standpoint. This enthusiasm is truly responsible for that essential labour which I have had to exercise in offering my observations in this treatise for whatever little they are worth, hoping, of course, that those better informed than I can develop them into something more useful to Indian sociology.

Pursuant to the above it is noted here that *Chapter 1* of the treatise embodies a *quick review* of those historical and political events in India which were the 'root cause of a man's becoming a refugee'. As it has been stated by Dr. Vernant that 'before a man can be described as a refugee, the political events which caused him leave, or to break with, the State to which he owed allegiance must be defined', I have attempted to unravel the chain of essential and prominent developments which took place in this country in fostering the communal *cum* political demand of division of India for the sake of Pakistan. To this end the author had to dwell heavily upon four important source-books namely, Rajendra Prasad's *India Divided* (1946); Allan Campbell-Johnson's *Mission with Mountbatten* (1951); Sachin Sen's *Birth of Pakistan* (1955); and V. P. Menon's *The Transfer of Power in India* (1957) in marshalling relevant facts linked up with the historical decision of the Partition of India on August 15, 1947. It goes without saying that a complicated issue like the Partition of India can never be squarely evaluated within a short length, nevertheless, what I have endeavoured shall definitely highlight the sequence of events leading to national acceptance for division of the Punjab and Bengal in favour of Pakistan. My objective is, of course, limited in portraying the background of the circumstances which led to the creation of the *problem group of displaced persons* in India. The members of the group being homeless, uprooted, diminished in all dimensions, became the worst victims of an unprecedented *crisis* to drain the cup to the dregs. In observing the historical and political vicissitudes in India in 1940s the author was continuously influenced by Dr. Vernant when he remarked that : 'Faced with the phenomenon refugee, the sociologist goes straight to the effects—and indeed to the causes—of shifts of population: the breaking of old, the making of new contacts. Causes interest him to the extent that they are social. The effects will

claim the attention of the sociologist only when there has been a permanent shift of population or one at least of sufficient duration to have social consequences'. (*The Refugees in the Post War World*, 1953).

In *Chapter 2* an attempt has been made to sum up firstly the main features of the decisions taken by the Bengal Boundary Commission (headed by Sir C. Radcliffe) in demarcating the Muslim majority and non-Muslim majority districts of *undivided* Bengal for the effective implementation of the Indian Independence Act of 1947 as well as His Majesty's Government Statement (approving the Partition of India) of February 20, 1947. The geographical areas which were assigned officially to the new State of East Pakistan have been explained to fix the territorial entity of West Bengal. Secondly, reliable official statistics regarding the volume of migration of the non-Muslim minorities from erstwhile East Bengal after Partition have very extensively been shown in drawing attention to the magnitude and severity of the relief and rehabilitation problems of the given uprooted humanity. This Chapter provides especially the understanding statements of the critical situation faced by West Bengal immediately after the emergence of the new Muslim State of East Pakistan.

The genesis of the first scientific survey of the displaced persons in West Bengal (1947-48) has been explained in *Chapter 3* with particular emphasis upon the survey-design, sampling procedure and sample size. We have moreover dwelt at length on the criteria by which a person could be and was defined actually as 'refugee' at the time of survey-operation.

Problems under examination have been explained in *Chapter 4*. The approach, method and data selection involved in developing the present study have also been outlined. Sociological problems that were related principally to the structural characteristics of the displaced families constitute the key-issue and accordingly, the refugees' family conditions with respect to their modes of migration, caste-bearings and occupational characteristics have been highlighted. The image with which the refugees concerned have been discussed has adequately been clarified. Due emphasis has consistently been paid upon the consequences of the conditions under which the Hindu and other non-Muslim minorities were forced to become a *problem group* as refugees in this country. The refugees of West Bengal have never been considered as *aliens* in tune with the definition found in international laws, rather they have been viewed as lawful

citizens of India. With respect to the present study three clear objectives (explained in *Chapter 4*) have been kept within purview of the study to clarify the scope and limitation of relevant sociological analyses of family-structures amongst the refugee-migrants. Data related to 16,156 family and non-familial units among displaced population of West Bengal have been utilized extensively, but for each objective of the study the size of the data did not eventually remain constant. Statistical tests have been made to reflect upon the nature of association between different non-quantitative characters chosen for close examinations. Several sociological concepts and terms used in the discourse have been duly explained.

The *first objective* of the present study namely, how the displaced persons behaved to remain together in family level by inner kin-bonds and in doing so, what *structural modifications* they had to accept within family units in post-migrational living, has been particularly examined in *Chapter 5*. In this context, the pattern of family organisations amongst the rural Hindus of *undivided* Bengal (1946-47) has been compared with that which is obtained for the refugee Hindus of the State. Rural families of the Hindus of *undivided* Bengal have been employed in the present discourse as the *baseline materials* and in terms of these materials changes in family organisations of the refugees have been measured and statistically tested.

The *second objective* of the present study namely, how far caste-influence caused differentiations among the refugee-migrants in their propensity for building up anew after migration disorganised kinship organisations on family level in West Bengal, has been particularly examined in *Chapter 6*. In this context, the displaced families and persons have been studied under three broad caste groups: high caste, middle caste, and low caste, representing three distinct ranks in Hindu caste hierarchy.

The *third objective* of the present treatise namely, how the displaced families originating from different occupation classes (agriculture and non-agriculture) behaved in reorganising disrupted families in West Bengal, has particularly been examined in *Chapter 7*. In this respect the displaced families and non-familial units have been placed for necessary analytical examination under four broad occupation-groups (classes): (a) Agriculture, (b) Trade and Commerce, (c) Services, and (d) Others, with strict reference to the pre-migrational occupation affiliation of the head (ego) of each displaced unit.

In the light of the findings related to the life and living of the displaced persons in post-partitioned West Bengal (1947-48) a sociological discussion of the people in general has been attempted in *Chapter 8*. In this discussion the problems of relief, rehabilitation, and above all, *social assimilation* of the uprooted migrants within the society at large of West Bengal have been examined in consonance with several facts, figures and empirical observations of recent origin. We have tried to present a meaningful 'description and explanation of social facts' pertinent to the refugee people of the State in exposing strength and weakness of the social policy formulated on national level especially for these people. Since the beginning of the *crisis* the refugees have consistently been treated under a specific social category in extending all possible economic ameliorations, their social (and psychological) needs have received much less attention and treatment. *Their problems were (and are) viewed not infrequently more as economical than social.* Upshot was that a peculiar sense of inferiority and underestimation precipitated amongst the refugees to create a feeling of 'we-group' and 'they-group' amongst them. Such social developments have already been pointed out by the Indian sociologists, yet the displaced persons' problems remain knotty and exasperating. Attempt has been made to develop a sociological perspective of a more comprehensive social policy of rehabilitation of the displaced families and in this respect attention is drawn to the issue of *differential vulnerability of groups to apparently similar stress* to emphasise upon the implication of intra-group variations existing amongst the displaced persons in question.

Several important statistics on the displaced persons of both West Bengal and India are available abundantly from a number of official publications and research reports. These statistical information are useful in developing a wholesome picture of the post-migrational life and living of the evicted persons from Pakistan. With reference to the present study these statistics have their own importance in offering substantial social understanding of the refugees. *Chapter 9* is essentially a running record of the said statistical information about the refugees who migrated after 1947-48, but more vigorously in 1950-51. The statistical tables incorporated in the Chapter shall help us with some very essential *aid-materials* to generate a link between the situation faced by the earliest migrants before 1950 and the circumstances

experienced by the refugee-migrants who came after 1950 from East Pakistan.

It must be admitted that my task in the present context has been principally to describe and explain as far as possible social facts pertaining to the displaced families and persons of West Bengal (1947-48) than to propose any full-proof solutions. I am always consciously alive to the limitations of the study and nevertheless, I have attempted with all my integrity to arrive at some interesting and if not, thought-provoking conclusions to make way cleared for more conclusive understanding of the uprooted people concerned in posterity. An organised body of social facts about the refugees have been collated and analysed to offer some significant results that remain so far virtually unexplored.

At the very outset I wish to express my gratitude to the Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta, which offered me the rare opportunity to undertake the study of the displaced persons of West Bengal in question, and especially to Dr. R. K. Mukherjee, of the Institute.

I am grateful to Dr. M. N. Basu, University Professor of Anthropology, Calcutta University, for the Foreword that he has written for this book. It is but for him that the book could be completed in its present form. I am indebted to him for ever.

My heartfull thanks go to Professor Cora Du Bois of Harvard University, U.S.A., Professor K. N. Mathur of Lucknow University, Professor G. C. Hallen, Shri Asok Mitra of Govt. of India, Professor N. K. Bose and to the Editorial Board of *Sociological Bulletin* (Bombay) and many others who also encouraged me severally to complete the present study.

Shri Narayan Mitra did all the typing work; Shri Sarat De prepared the ink-drawing of the bar-charts and the map of Bengal. I am especially thankful to all staff, particularly to Shri Ranjit Sanyal, Shri Madhusudan Mukherjee, Shri Bhagya-dhar De and Shri Sushil Acharya, of the Indian Statistical Institute Library, Calcutta, for their ungrudging help and co-operation. The excellent library-service that I could always avail was definitely due to Shri J. Saha, Chief Librarian and Shri Monoj Neogi, Deputy Librarian of the Institute. Shri Kalyan Saha and Shri Ranjit Ghose of the Institute Library helped to arrange for the photostat copies of the bar-charts. Above all, I am deeply indebted to Dr. B. P. Adhikari of the Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta, without whom I could never materialise my

doctoral-project. Help and cooperation given by Shri Bibhas Sasmal is greatly appreciated.

I offer my thanks to Shri Jogen Bose, Shri Mihir Kumar Mukherjee and Shri Sukumar Ghatak for their prompt and commendable service in getting the book published within a short time.

I would certainly fail in my duty if I do not record my sincerest thanks to Dr. R. N. Chatterjee of R. G. Kar Medical College and Hospital, Calcutta, Shrimati Churula Pakrasi and Sriman Himadri Pakrasi.

Lastly, I am, of course, solely responsible for all the deficiencies of the book which is, in fact, the revised version of my doctoral dissertation submitted to the Calcutta University in 1968.

Calcutta,
1st May, 1971.

KANTI B. PAKRASI.

"The function of the sociologist is not to evaluate changes as either good or bad but to secure concrete facts on actual changes in progress and to describe and analyze them'.

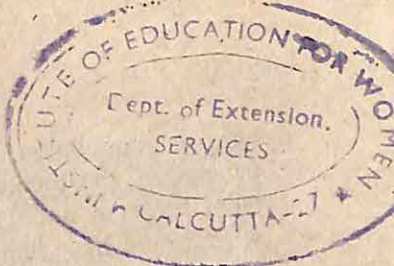
— Burgess, E. W. and H. J. Locke (1960) :
The Family : From Institution to Companionship.

"The sociologist seeks to describe and to explain facts, the jurist to build definition which frame these facts. Faced with the phenomenon refugee, the sociologist goes straight to the effects—and indeed to the causes—of shifts of population : the breaking of old, the making of new contacts. Causes interest him to the extent that they are social. . . . The effects will claim the attention of the sociologist only when there has been a permanent shift of population or one at least of sufficient duration to have social consequences."

— Jacques Vernant (1953) :
The Refugees in the Post-War World.

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CHAPTER 1

PARTITION IN RETROSPECT : A QUICK SURVEY

Among the many outstanding and significant events which had offered both glory and blemish to the uprising growth of India in the later part of the decade of 1941-50 few can compare in importance with the Partition of this land of ancient civilization on August 15, 1947. On the long road receding into the past of the country this date is a 'milestone' which points out a 'critical cross-road'. Event of Partition was though a crucial development on one particular day of a year, yet it directs to a long drawn out and complicated *process* engrossing multiple vicissitudes of utmost importance. This process has its own socio-political history which coheres with the general history of emerging independent India in the post-war World. History of partition teaches a lesson at once in this effect that the act of Partition should never merely mean the physical (territorial) division of this great sub-continent, it cuts through the 'corporate living' of many thousands of people who had, and still have, scores of cultural similarities. Political and religious decisions happened to overpower cultural and economic considerations to divide overnight the people concerned into two distinct groups having contending passions.

Apart from enormous damage done to the economy of millions of people by the Partition of India, millions of minority groups, having been forced, suddenly and unexpectedly, to give up all social attachments with their natal villages and home country had to arrive helpless, without financial resources and without unquestionable rights, in a new environment of the receiving country. Quite often they were forced to live at a lower social and economic level than they had been in their original ones. Partition of India created a *problem group*, the member of which is 'invariably and essentially some one who is homeless, uprooted, a helpless casualty, diminished in all his circumstances, the victim of events for which, at least, as an individual, he cannot be held responsible' (Vernant : 1953). To realise the grave situation engendered by the Act of Partition and subsequent mass migration of the affected people the following excerpt may be noted with interest : 'Because of

our vast population, it is sometimes difficult for us to get into perspective the implications of the mass migration of the people from Pakistan into India in 1947. If we can imagine, however, what would have happened if instead of a few hundred thousand people who fled from Europe to Britain during the dark days between 1934 and 1939, the number of refugees had included the whole population of Norway or Denmark, we can get some idea of the problem which faced this country in 1947' (Government of India : 1957). These lines speak volumes for themselves to direct attention to those dark days of 1947 and 1948 and to those bewildered, dispirited and homeless people who suffered enormous violence, bitterness of hostility, nervous tension, deprivation, insecurity, uncertainty and what not. Catastrophic circumstances prevailed, indeed, immediately before and after the official declaration of the partition line between India and Pakistan.

Any further discussion on the event and effect of Partition would, of course, remain incomplete without an understanding of the *objective situation* that led to the unprecedented minority problems coupled with mass migration in either parts of truncated India of 1947. *Act of Partition was never an outcome of some hasty decisions*, rather an interesting history is there to show why and how such an Act was ultimately translated into action. Accordingly, a careful perusal of the said history tinged with communal tensions and feuds is imperative to evaluate the notion of 'inevitability' of Partition of India. In India from long past, particularly since 1922, our history shows us that communal misunderstandings and strifes appeared almost invariably at some critical moments in the political field of the country. 'We find them occurring whenever the demand for transfer of power from British to Indian hands has become insistent and strong, and whenever the two major communities of India have shown unity of purpose and action' (Prasad : 1946). An intensive agitation for Home Rule in 1917 swept the country and curiously enough towards the later part of 1917 there occurred the serious communal feuds in Bihar. In the following year Hindu-Muslim strifes became terrific in Uttar Pradesh (1918) and these communal frenzies continued with varying intensity and horror till the serious outbreaks of riots in Multan (Punjab) in 1922. The orgy of riots cast gloomy repercussions throughout the country. Progressive deterioration in the communal situation prompted national leaders to make a stop to this fratricidal conflicts in the

greater interest of India as a whole. But the overt fact remains to be appreciated that communal riots in many cases had a *political* background, although apparently they were caused by socio-religious fanaticism. Nevertheless, it is unfortunate to have again serious riots in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh in 1931.

On the otherhand, it has been noticed that the British Government for their best interests resisted resolutely all proposals for 'any advance in constitutional matters' effecting more power for the Indians in administrative field. But it was equally seriously felt that the Government could not continue its resistance long and 'no advance was possible without some sort of a communal settlement'. By 1927 at the instance of the Indian National Congress some prominent Muslim leaders offered what came to be known as the *Muslim proposals* for the effective removal of the continuing deplorable differences between two most populous communities of India namely, the Hindus and Muslims. The Muslim leaders made it clear that they might agree to *joint electorates* for Provincial and Central Legislatures if (i) Sind was made a separate Province; (b) in the Punjab and Bengal the proportion of Muslim representation was in accordance with their population and (c) in the Central Legislature the said proportion was not less than one third of the total. In that year of 1927 the Congress Committee passed resolutions 'substantially accepting the Muslim proposals' and also laid down certain rules dealing with the *religious* and *social* aspects of the question. The seed of partition was, thus, sown and the Muslims were guaranteed of their communal demands which ultimately wrenched Pakistan—a separate State for the Muslims.

When the Constitution Act of 1935 conceded the major demands of the Muslim League the question of separate electorates was answered positively in favour of the Muslims. But, in spite of all the safeguards that the League had demanded and obtained, in spite of the fact that Muslim Ministries were functioning in the Muslim Majority Provinces like the Punjab, Sind, North-West Frontier Province, Bengal, and off and on in Assam the Muslim League nourished genuine apprehensive impression that the Muslims were still oppressed with having no real safeguards.

On April 1, 1940 the Viceroy Lord Linlithgow communicated to Mr. Jinnah, the mouthpiece of the Muslims: 'The undertaking given by His Majesty's Government to examine the constitutional field in consultation with the representatives of all

parties and interests in India connoted no dictation but negotiation. Admittedly a substantial measure of agreement amongst the communities in India is essential, if the vision of the United India..... is to become a reality; for I cannot believe that any Government or Parliament in this country would attempt to impose by force upon, for example, 80 million Muslim subjects of His Majesty in India a form of *constitution* under which they would not live peacefully and contentedly'. Mr. Jinnah submitted a note subsequently (July 1, 1940) to the Viceroy answering the latter. The note contained the following points: 'That no pronouncement or statement should be made by His Majesty's Government which would in any way militate against the basic and fundamental principles laid down by the *Lahore resolution about the division of India* and creating Muslim States in North-West and Eastern zones.....' (Prasad : 1946). The text of Lahore resolution is appended below (Appendix A).

On August 7, 1940, the Viceroy issued a statement declaring his Government's policy. With reference to the Government's previous declaration relating to the examination of the *entire act* of 1935 the Viceroy made it clear that his Government could not contemplate 'the transfer of their responsibilities.... to any system of Government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life, nor could they be parties to the coercion of such elements into submission to such a Government'. It was promised by the Government that after the *conclusion of second World War* a representative body constituted by the principal elements in India's national life would be set up for devising 'the framework of a new amended the constitution of the party so as to embody the attainment of Pakistan in the creed.

In March 1942, Sir Stafford Cripps, made a significant declaration contemplating 'the creation of a new Indian Union which should form a Dominion equal in status to the other Dominions of the Crown'. This Declaration clearly conceded the *right of cessation* to any Province of British India from the proposed All-India Union and 'practically accepted the demand of the Muslim League for the creation of Muslim States *independent of the Indian Union*'. But, in the long run, Cripps Mission failed to satisfy under contradictory political demands both the National Congress and the Muslim League.

The Cripps Mission having failed, the All-India Congress

Committee passed the famous 'Quit India' resolution at Bombay on 7-9 August, 1942. Against this political move the Muslim League also passed a resolution (16-20 August, 1942) in this effect that the 'Quit India' movement of the Congress was directed not only 'to coerce the British Government into handing over power to a Hindu oligarchy... but also to force the Musalmans to submit and surrender to the Congress terms and dictation'.

Subsequently, Mahatma Gandhi held prolonged conversations with Mr. Jinnah in September, 1944, with no fruitful results. Mahatma failed to gather from Mr. Jinnah 'a complete picture of his Pakistan with his boundaries demarcated, constitution fore-shadowed and safeguards for the minorities in it defined'. Next came the moves on the part of Lord Wavell who proposed in July 1945 for a 'provisional interim settlement without any prejudice to the future constitution' and also for a 'parity of representation in the Viceroy's Executive Council between Hindus other than the scheduled castes and the Muslims'. Thus, the cardinal demand of the League for enjoying unconditionally *equality of representation* in the Provincial Government with the Hindus was granted. But this capital offer to the Muslims became again abortive when nomination of all the Muslim members to the Council was stubbornly insisted by Mr. Jinnah. A political deadlock prevailed in the country. Thereafter the question of early transfer of power by the British Government gave rise to serious misgivings in public mind and manoeuvres in political activities in subsequent years. Political tensions grew wild and mistrust gained ground to vitiate the thinkings of the public leaders. The question of Partition of India into Muslim and Hindu zones began to assume mounting importance. The communal problem in India became an *explosive issue* both to the Hindus and the Muslims, but they were surely not in a position to solve it as they desired. The third party, that is, the British Government was there to foil any move that might endanger British interests in India. A 'communal triangle' was firmly established with the expanding 'angle of difference' between two sides of the triangle as represented by the Hindus and the Muslims respectively. Political agitations, communal fratricides, and above all a national crisis choked eventually the normal life and living of the common people of the country between 1945 and 1946.

It was particularly in the middle of 1940s the communal feuds assumed unusual proportions. The terrible communal out-

breaks in Bengal, Bihar and the Punjab in the later months of 1946 and beginning of 1947 overshadowed contemporary social and political life of the Indians. Communal frenzy gathered momentum, especially after the general elections of 1946 that was held under the British rule. And since then Muslim demand for the division of India and the establishment of a *completely* Muslim State to be known as Pakistan, gained a solid foothold among the Muslims of the country. Truly speaking, by the middle of 1940s the demand for a separate Muslim State (Pakistan) was becoming irresistible in India.

On March 22, 1947 Lord Mountbatten arrived in New Delhi as the new Viceroy, but then a bundle of complicated and explosive problems were awaiting him. He met with not only a critical but also a despairing situation throughout India. He came at that blessed time when the British Government had already announced a *transfer of power* without knowing clearly how it could be effected. Eventually he had the exclusive onus to bring about an honourable settlement to ensure transfer of power in such a manner that would satisfy the contesting parties of the country.

To dwell specifically on this part of socio-political history of Partition which was created during the tenure of Lord Mountbatten one would profit to refer to kaleidoscopic documentation of major events since March, 1947 to August, 1947. From this documentation (Campbell-Johnson : 1951) it is learnt that communal riot was still spreading by chain reactions—the key province of the Punjab, with its three-fold-Hindu, Muslim and Sikh—communal problems, governed by emergency decree was in limelight to jeopardise any healthy administration. In addition to this a Viceregal plan by Mountbatten's predecessor appeared 'nothing more or less a phased military evaluation' to cast genuine confusions among the Indians. Political atmosphere was in rage to witness a Congress formula for an Independent Sovereign Republic against a Direct Action Campaign by the Muslim League and at the sametime Paramountcy which was sure returning to the Indian Princes but they had officially no machinery for direct negotiation to provide a new relationship with possible successor or successors in British India or, indeed, with anyone else. In short, in the early part of 1947 the British Government in New Delhi felt the ominous impact of a complicated and almost a morbid situation in which the Indians were rioting, the Princes were falling out among them.

selves, the entire Indian Civil Service and Police were running down, and the Britishers who were left, became 'sceptical and full of foreboding'.

On 23 March, 1947 in his significant meeting with Lord Mountbatten Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru commented negatively on the working of the interim Government, rather, he reiterated his famous 'tripartite proposals' for the Punjab in this effect that the Province would be 'divided up on communal lines with a central authority to deal with certain major non-communal subjects'. He was convinced that this was the 'only way to break the intolerable deadlock of Government' under section 93 of the Government of India 1935 Act, which Mountbatten's predecessor had had to impose invoking reserve powers for the Viceroy at the beginning of the month in question. It has been commented that 'Nehru's tripartite proposals for the Punjab were the first sign of Congress acceptance of the Hindustan-Pakistan division'.

Till 14 April, 1947 Mountbatten was not ready to put his Plan for transfer of power into final shape as he was awaiting full and frank views of the English Governors of all Provinces on the draft of his Plan. Broad principles of his Plan were :

- (1) that the responsibility for Partition, if it comes, is to rest fairly upon the Indian themselves;
- (2) the Provinces, generally speaking, shall have the right to determine their own future;
- (3) Bengal and the Punjab are to be notionally partitioned for voting purposes;
- (4) the predominantly Moslem Sylhet district of Assam is to be given the option of joining the Moslem Province created by a partitioned Bengal;
- (5) general elections are to be held in the North-West Frontier Province'. (Campbell-Johnson : 1951).

On 6 May, 1947 a crucial agreement between Mr. Jinnah, the master guardian of Muslim interests, and Mahatma Gandhi, the supreme arbiter of Hindu interests, was announced to resolve two extraordinarily vital issues: one of two issues was the *question of division of India into Pakistan and Hindustan* immediately after the complete 'cessation of British Suzerainty over India'. Gandhiji did not accept the principle of division, as that was 'not inevitable', whereas Mr. Jinnah was emphatic to declare Pakistan as 'inevitable' in offering 'the only practical solution' of India's contemporary political deadlock.

In the very month of May, 1947 it was then transpired in

the authoritative circle that the Viceroy had carried to British Cabinet at London a *Plan* and the same had already been blessed by the Congress and the Muslim League leaders. The Plan was ultimately approved by the British Cabinet (Appendix B). It was argued then that the said Plan was designed under the 'compulsion of necessity of the hours' when the agreement of the major parties of Indian people on the Cabinet Mission Plan of May 16, 1945 was not definitely forthcoming. At that critical hours 'in the absence of an agreement, the task of devising a method by which the wishes of the Indian people could be ascertained devolved on His Majesty's Government' and eventually Mountbatten Plan was readily offered as an alternative to the Indians by His Majesty's Government. The Plan did not, of course, preclude negotiations between the interested communities for a United India in contrast to the British plan for division of the country in consonance with numerical majority of either the Hindus or the Muslims in each Province.

The essential features of Mountbatten Plan have been shown in the following manner (Sen : 1955).

1. The Provincial Legislative Assemblies of Bengal and the Punjab (excluding European Members) will each be asked to meet in two parts, the one representing the Muslim majority districts and the other the rest of the province. (The 1941 census figures were to be taken as authoritative). Members of the two parts of the Legislative Assembly sitting separately will be empowered to vote whether or not the Province should be partitioned. The issue is to be decided by a simple majority.
2. In the event of the partition, each part of the Legislative Assembly will decide which Constituent Assembly they will join.
3. If the partition-decision is adopted, a Boundary Commission will be set up by the Governor-General.
4. The Legislative Assembly of Sind (excluding European members) will take its own decision on the question of partition in the Constituent Assembly.
5. A referendum will be made to the electors of the present Legislative Assembly in the N.W.F. Province to choose which the alternatives they wish to adopt. (A new Constituent Assembly consisting of representatives of

those areas which will decide not to participate in the existing Constituent Assembly was visualised).

6. British Beluchistan will be given an opportunity to choose the Constituent Assembly it wishes to join.
7. If Bengal is divided, a referendum will be held in Sylhet (predominantly Muslim) to decide if the district of Sylhet should form a part of Assam or East Bengal. If it is amalgamated with Eastern Bengal, a Boundary Commission will be set up to demarcate the Muslim majority areas of Sylhet district and contiguous Muslim majority areas of adjoining districts which will then be transferred to East Bengal.

If Bengal and the Punjab are partitioned, fresh elections to choose their representatives in the Constituent Assembly on the scale of one for every million of population, according to the principle contained in the Cabinet Mission's Plan, will be held. Similar elections for Sylhet will be held. The representatives of the various areas will join the existing Constituent Assembly or form the new Constituent Assembly.

8. There will be negotiations :
 - (a) between the representatives of the respective successor authorities about all subjects, now dealt with by the Central Government.
 - (b) between the different successor authorities and His Majesty's Government for treaties in regard to matters arising out of the transfer of power.
 - (c) as to administration of provincial subjects, in case of partitioned provinces.

Agreements with the tribes of the N.W.F. Province will have to be negotiated by the appropriate successor authority.

In the background of the proposed Mountbatten Plan the prominent Congress leaders of the time sat in a conference with some topmost Muslim leaders to deliberate upon the provisions of the Plan on 2 June, 1947. *None of the leaders (seven in all) did object to the Plan* and moreover Pandit Nehru declared that 'while on balance they accept it'. Viceroy Mountbatten cordially agreed with the deliberations of the Hindu and Muslim leaders, as he foresaw that moment his success in a most complex and decisive task pertaining to honourable transfer of power to the Indians in general. Next day the President of the Indian National Congress

offered 'a firm general acceptance of the Plan on behalf of the whole Congress Working Committee'.

Most significantly it is learnt that when Mountbatten had pronounced that 'the Plan seemed to represent as near to a hundred percent agreement as it was possible to get', the assembled political leaders voiced in their second meeting that 'the Viceroy had correctly interpreted and recorded their views'. Formal announcement of the Plan was proposed by the Viceroy and none of the leaders raised any objection. 'The Administrative Consequences of Partition' was soon made public and *'it was quickly agreed that division should be made on the basis of citizenship, which in its turn would be based on considerations of geography'* (Campbell-Johnson : 1951).

Tremendous news of India's Partition along with potential agreement of the political leaders (both Hindu and Muslim) on this vital decision was made known in the night of the red-letter day of 3 June, 1947. Next day, in a press conference Lord Mountbatten gave the first informal indication that 15th August of 1947 would be the *likely date* for the actual transfer of power to the two *new Dominions*. In the face of the proposed significant changes in India's political, economic, and social life we may remember what Pandit Nehru announced to the people of India on June 3, 1947: 'I am convinced that our *present* decision is the *right* one even from the larger viewpoint. The United India that we have laboured for was not one of compulsion and coercion but a free and willing association of a free people . . . '.

On the other side, in his broadcast to the Muslim people, Mr. Jinnah also granted immediate favour to the Plan of June 3 in general, but according to him Pakistan which the Muslims would get happened to be 'mutilated, truncated and moth-eaten, because Bengal and the Punjab were to be partitioned, and Sylhet was the only district from Assam which was to be included in Pakistan'.

In the context of the official declaration and acceptance of the Plan by the political leaders concerned the All India Congress Committee expressed 'clear endorsement of Partition' in the following language: "In view, however, of the refusal of the Muslim League to accept the Plan of May 16 and to participate in the Constituent Assembly and further in view of the policy of the Congress that 'it cannot think in terms of compelling the people in any territorial unit to remain in an Indian union against their declaration and established will,' the All India Congress Com-

PARTITION IN RETROSPECT

mittee accepts the proposals embodied in the announcement of June 3, 1947, which had laid down a procedure for ascertaining the will of the people concerned. The proposals of June 3, 1947 are likely to lead to the *secession of some parts of the country from India*. However much this may be regretted the All India Congress Committee accepts the possibility in the circumstances now prevailing." This resolution was ratified by the All India Congress Committee (AICC) on June 15, 1947.

Thus, India's division into two clearly-demarcated territorial parts inhabited by the majority of either the Hindus or the Muslims turned out to be an inevitable development. Though 'the Mountbatten Plan was not an award, nor was it a recommendation' it received active support and blessing from the leaders of both the Hindu and the Muslim communities of the country. Both the Congress and the League were fully convinced that a *united India*, as contemplated in the State Paper of May 16, 1946, was not possible and desirable. Partition of the land appeared as the cardinal issue of the day. The Congress was convinced that there was already Pakistan in action both in the Punjab and Bengal and it had to be given a formal validity. Necessarily there was then no point to stick to the old and noble idea of a united India. The social as well as political situation in 1947 became so critical and choking that the Congress was forced to make bold but quick decisions about two alternatives—Pakistan with physical partitioning of India or 'the disintegration of India into many mutually hostile pockets'. The Congress accepted the demand for Pakistan to make an absolute end to the age-old communal problems of India. Division of India was ensured once for all exactly the moment when the Congress leaders accepted Mountbatten Plan on June 3, 1947, and particularly when the President of the Constituent Assembly declared on April 28, 1947 in this effect : 'while we have accepted the Cabinet Mission's Statement of May 16, 1946, which contemplated a Union of the different provinces and states within the country, it may be that the Union may *not* comprise all provinces. If that unfortunately comes to pass, we shall have to be content with a constitution for a *part of it*. In that case, we can and should insist that one principle will apply to all parts of the country and no constitution will be forced upon *any unwilling part* of it. This may mean not only the division of India, but a *division of some provinces*. For this we must be prepared and the Assembly may have to draw up a constitution based on such a division.'

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11
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The issue of partition remained amply overt in the plan of Cabinet Mission of May 16, 1946. The Labour Government in England envisaged in this plan that India was to be an *independent* dominion in the Commonwealth and would compose three distinct regions which might, after British withdrawal, *secede* from the national Government of India. 'These provisions made Pakistan possible and yet saved the British from granting it' (Wilcox : 1963). Later on in 1946 election (July) when the Muslim League captured all save five of the constituencies reserved for the Muslims and the Congress won all but nine of the general seats the contemporary socio-political situation exposed the fact that 'an organized minority was pitted against an organized minority in a situation in which one party's loss was the other's gain'. It is precisely in the background of this special situation the significance of President's declaration as noted above, has to be merited.

In full accordance with the Plan of June 3 administrative measures were promptly instituted to elicit the opinion of the members elected either in the Punjab or Bengal Legislative Assembly. Accordingly, 'the Bengal Legislative Assembly met on June 20, 1947, to decide the partition issue. *Members representing the non-Muslim majority districts decided by 58 to 21 votes that Bengal should be partitioned* and that the Constitution of the State comprising the non-Muslim areas, should be formed by the existing Constituent Assembly. Members representing the Muslim majority districts sitting separately, decided by 106 to 35 votes against partition. When the result of the voting in the other part was communicated, they decided by 107 to 34 votes that *the State comprising the Muslim majority districts should join the proposed Pakistan Constituent Assembly*. The Muslim majority section further decided by 105 to 35 votes that the new East Bengal province should agree to the amalgamation of Sylhet district with it, if the referendum results in favour of such amalgamation.

'The only question for decision at the joint meeting was whether Bengal as a whole should join the existing Constituent Assembly or a new and separate one consisting of representatives of the areas deciding not to participate in the existing body. Ninety members voted for Bengal joining the existing Constituent Assembly and 126 members for a new and a separate Constituent Assembly' (Sen : 1955). The Punjab Legislative Assembly

decided in favour of partition of the land of five Rivers on June 23, 1947.

Now that the Punjab and Bengal had declared in favour of their *own partition* and as a result, half of each would be taking their share in the formation of a 'new and separate' Constituent Assembly, the full machinery for administering the act of Partition was set in motion by June 27, 1947. The *Partition Committee*, which was limited to the Congress and the Muslim League members of the Interim Government, now gave way to a *Partition Council* enjoying wider authority and which included now the most powerful proponent of Pakistan, Mr. Jinnah. This Council became the supreme most authoritative body to pronounce final policy and decisions about the details of partition-business in view. It was proposed in the Council that Sir Cyril Radcliffe would act as the Chairman of the Punjab and Bengal Boundary Commissions.

Thus, India and Pakistan emerged as two young Dominions and the issue of partition was linked to independence as an indispensable condition. The terms of partition were made known to the Indian people on June 3, 1947 and subsequently, the British Parliament ratifying Mountbatten's Plan promulgated the Indian Independence Act, 1947 on July 18, 1947 (Appendix C). In accordance with this Act the former Indian Empire was superseded on August 15, 1947 by the said two dominions of the Union of India and Pakistan.

The first and most perceptible repercussion of the proposal of Partition was the outbreak of serious communal disturbances on both sides. These outbreaks only took a new dimension, since it was a bare fact that communal, that is, religious tensions had lately been steadily mounting up. Such tensions had become particularly acute in 1945-46, as 'the hour of independence loomed nigh'. In Calcutta (West Bengal) angry demonstrations accompanied by violence on a big scale had already been effected by the followers of the Muslim League right in the month of August, 1946. These demonstrations and violence stirred the political and social atmosphere most acutely. Riots began to occur in chain-reactions nearly everywhere and almost simultaneously in later months of 1946. In March, 1947 communal hatred and fracas grew wild at Rawalpindi, Lahore and Amritsar of the Punjab.

The Governor of the Punjab reported on July 1, 1947 that the communal tension in the Province was steadily but quickly

spreading as 15th August was approaching. The situation in Lahore and Amritsar gave solid ground for grave concern. The violence already took the form of scattered but widespread arson and frequently stabbing was carried out by 'cloak-and-dagger' techniques which were very difficult to suppress by normal police or military action. In the face of such alarming condition Viceroy Mountbatten had to intimate 'a full discussion' on the Punjab crisis and thereby tried to avert 'a most serious situation' in the boundary areas of the Punjab.

It is learnt that soon after the announcement of the Radcliffe Award on 17 August, a determined campaign to drive out population of minority communities was evident all over the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province. There were disquieting disturbances in the districts of Lahore, Sheikhupura, Sialkot and Gujranwala. A massacre on an unprecedented scale took place in Sheikhupura of the Punjab. This was followed by a violent anti-Muslim reaction in Amritsar. Thereafter communal frenzy gripped the people on both sides of the proposed border of two new States in the Punjab, taking a heavy toll of lives and creating an exodus of population between the two Dominions, the like of which has never before been known in history. What started as a trickle very soon developed into a flood which, sweeping through the Punjab, engulfed the city and province of Delhi and overflowed into the western districts of the United Province.

'The uprooted millions were in a terrible mental state. They had been driven from their homes under conditions of indescribable horror and misery They had been subjected to terrible indignities. They had witnessed their near and dear ones hacked to pieces before their eyes and their houses ransacked, looted and set on fire by their own neighbours. They had no choice but to seek safety in flight, filled with wrath at what they had seen, and full of anguish for numberless missing kinsmen who were still stranded in Pakistan and for their womenfolk who had been abducted

'The holocaust in Western Pakistan had its repercussions in East Punjab. The streams of fleeing refugees with their tales of woe and suffering made a profound impression on the people. In vain were appeals made to them to remember that retaliation was no remedy. The spirit of revenge was abroad, working up communal bitterness to a frenzied pitch, till all

restraint was thrown to the winds and there ensued a wholesale attack on Muslims

'Trouble broke out afresh on a large scale and firearms were freely used. Even with the help of the troops it was not easy to restore order. If it had been only a question of protecting the few against the onslaughts of the many, perhaps the troops—even though small in number—might have proved equal to the task. But both sides seemed well provided with firearms, were equally well organized and determined and were employing guerilla tactics

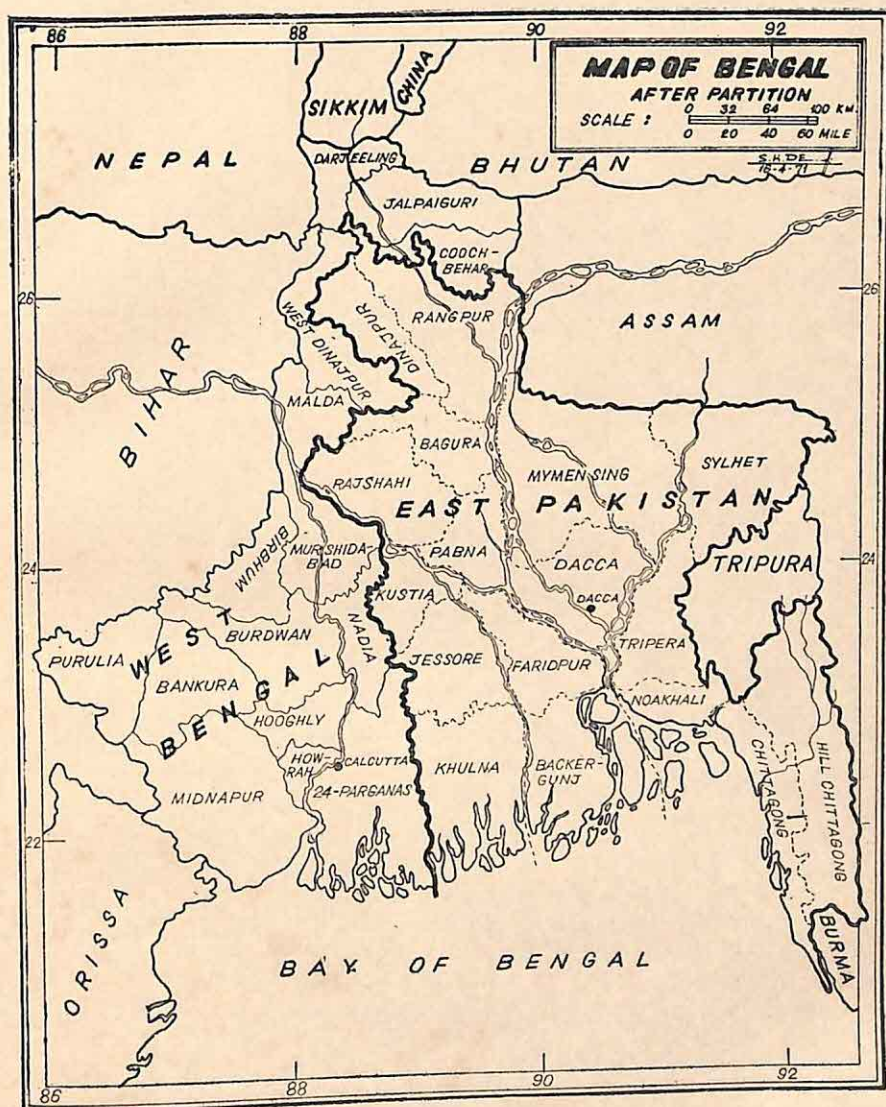
'Organized rioting apart, sporadic and isolated incidents of looting, stabbing and arson were frequent Muslim shops situated in predominantly Hindu areas were the chief targets for loot and needy refugees were the chief beneficiaries. Stabbing was developed into an art. The tragedy was that for the most part it was women, children and the aged who were the victims. For days together, no effective protection could be given against treacherous, sneaking and silent killing by individuals impelled by an uncontrollable urge to settle the score; an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth' (Menon : 1957).

Such was the morbid situation across the marches of the two newly created Dominions in the West of India, while in the eastern India communal tension and turmoil was afoot since the Great Calcutta riot to cause panic and insecurity among the minorities of each Dominion. Heart-breaking news began to pour in from both the partitioned provinces of the Punjab and Bengal which 'provided at once a warning and an example of the need for bold leadership' and firm administration. What Sir Jenkins, Governor of the Punjab, described aptly as 'the war of succession' had meanwhile broken out in full fury in the land of five rivers and in several other quarters of India.

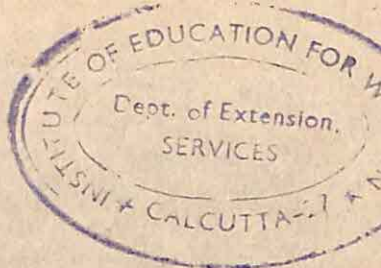
Truly speaking, communal riots broke out nearly everywhere and almost simultaneously. The Great Calcutta riots took place exactly one year before the actual Partition of Bengal in August, 1947. 'Between these dates, serious communal disturbances had taken place in several parts of the country, more particularly in Tipperah-Noakhali of Bengal, in Bihar and in the Punjab. There was serious apprehensions in the minds of Hindus and Muslims, whichever community was in a minority in the proposed dominions of India and Pakistan, that their lives, honour and property would not be safe in the new regime. In Bengal, the Noakhali-Tipperah disasters had started large

scale migration of Hindu population from these districts to other areas, notably Calcutta, even before the decision about partition of India made public. After that decision was made known unrest and apprehension grew in volume and extent—specially in the districts proposed to be placed in Eastern Bengal province of the Pakistan Dominion' (Chakravarti : 1949).

The above narration exposes quickly the *objective situation* in which Partition of India was translated into action to give birth to Pakistan—a completely Muslim Dominion. Terrific events took place in 1946-47 to embitter Hindu-Muslim relations in undivided India and ultimately by making divisions of the Punjab and Bengal a *political solution* was achieved at the cost of a *social catastrophe*.



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CHAPTER 2

BENGAL DIVIDED : MINORITIES ON THE MOVE

Enjoining the Partition of India and the transfer of power to the Dominions of India and Pakistan the historical statement of His Majesty's Government (commonly known as the 3rd June Plan), declared that for the immediate purpose of partition-business the following districts of pre-partitioned Bengal would be treated as *Muslim majority districts* according to 1941 census-returns :

1. *Chittagong Division* : Chittagong, Noakhali and Tippera.
2. *Dacca Division* : Bakerganj, Dacca, Faridpur and Mymensing.
3. *Presidency Division* : Jessore, Murshidabad and Nadia.
4. *Rajshahi Division* : Bogra, Dinajpur, Malda, Pabna, Rajshahi and Rangpur.

This directive was only a preliminary step awaiting 'a detailed investigation of boundary questions' by a Boundary Commission. This Commission was instructed by the Governor-General 'to demarcate the boundaries' of the two parts of Bengal 'on the basis of ascertaining the *contiguous* majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims'. Until the final report of the Commission was available the provisional boundaries as indicated above by Muslim majority districts, remained in force to make functioning of the Legislative Assembly effective in 'two parts' according to Muslim/non-Muslim majority districts of Bengal as a whole.

The award of the Bengal Boundary Commission presided over by Sir C. Radcliffe announced the following decisions of utmost significance :

1. To *East Bengal* (East Pakistan) was assigned (i) the whole of the Chittagong and Dacca Divisions comprising 7 districts; (ii) the whole of Rangpur, Bogra, Rajshahi and Pabna districts of the *Rajshahi Division*; and (iii) the whole of Khulna (Jessore) district of the Presidency Division.

2. To *West Bengal* was assigned the whole of the Burdwan Division; the districts of Calcutta, the 24-Parganas, and Murshidabad of the Presidency Division, and the Darjeeling district of the Rajshahi Division.

3. The *five districts* of Nadia, Jessore, Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri

and Malda were, of course, divided between the two new provinces of West Bengal and East Pakistan.

4. In *Nadia district* the following 12 police stations (thanas) were assigned to East Pakistan. These police stations constituted 1352 square miles in area :

Alamdanga, Bhairamara, Chandanga, Damurhuda, that part of Daulatpur, east of the river Mathabanga, Gangani, Jilannagar, Khoksa, Kumarkhali, Kushtia and Mirpur.

5. In *24 Parganas district* of West Bengal two police stations of Bongaon and Gaighata were added from the district of Jessore of East Bengal. These two police stations comprise 319.8 square miles in area.

6. In the case of *Dinajpore district* the following 10 police stations were included in West Bengal :

Banshihari, that part of Balurghat, west of the main north-south railway line, Hemtabad, Itahar, Kaliaganj, Kosmandi, Kumarganj, Rajganj, Sangarampur and Tapan.

The remainder of the district went to East Bengal.

7. The whole of *Jalpaiguri district* was included in West Bengal except 5 police stations and some enclaves, south of Cooch-Behar State. These 5 police stations constituting 672 square miles are : Boda, Debiganj, Pachagar, Patgram and Tetulia.

8. In *Malda district* the following 5 police stations were assigned to East Bengal and they accounted for 596 square miles in area :

Bholaghat, Gomastapur, Nachol, Nawabganj and Shibganj.

The remainder of the district came to West Bengal.

9. The award regarding Sylhet resulted in the *whole of that district* being transferred from the province of Assam to the new province of East Bengal, except for the four police stations of Patharkandi, Ratabari, Karimganj and Badarpur. These police stations were inhabited mostly by the Bengali-speaking Hindus.

10. *Murshidabad district* did not lose to East Bengal any entire police station according to the award in question, yet several *mauzas* (village-clusters) of a number of bordering police stations were and still are in dispute or de-facto possession of East Bengal. (Census Report : 1951).

With this official pronouncement *undivided Bengal* was immediately demarcated into two distinct regions : West Bengal and East Pakistan (formerly East Bengal). East Pakistan

became the land of the Muslims who are in that geographical region numerically in majority. The Hindus in particular and the people of other religious faith in general constituted the minority groups of that region. In West Bengal the Muslims comprised the minority group of major importance.

The population of undivided Bengal was, thus, considered only from the point of view of religious affiliation and eventually the question of Hindu or Muslim-majority districts predominated in the mind of the British officials of that period. Before the actual partition of the Province of Bengal was officially announced the distribution of Hindu and Muslim majority districts between 1931 and 1941 was, in fact, given singular cognizance for necessary administrative as well as legislative actions.

Prior to partition it was estimated that the total Hindu population in 'Pakistanized Bengal' would be 15.6 millions including the population in tribal groups that were Hindus or semi-Hindus but which were excluded from the Hindu community as some separate community in the 1941 census. (Mukerjee : 1944). From this quantitative concentration of either Hindus or Muslims in different districts of Bengal the majority districts of each community may be quickly assessed but 'where economic and social relations of the two communities so interwoven and intermingled in the villages', should religion be any practical basis of political solution? The Radcliffe Award paid full value only to the issue of religion in resolving quickly the *new boundaries* between two Dominions in question. Bengal was ultimately divided into West Bengal and East Pakistan in accordance with the decisions of the people's representatives in Bengal Legislative Assembly on June 20, 1947.

With the publication of this crucial 'award' unrest and apprehension grew in alarming volume and extent among the minorities of Pakistan, specially in those areas which were proposed to be included in East Pakistan. The Hindus began to quit the Muslim State in question in larger volumes than before. As a matter of fact, after the awful Noakhali-Tipperah Riots in October, 1946, migration of the Hindu minorities from formerly East Bengal to West Bengal and other Provinces of India surged up in varying magnitude. In the beginning 'the stream of movement' was rather thin, 'only people who had some sort of footing in West Bengal also—through trade, industry, services, etc.—sent their womenfolk and valuables'. *This stream of migration gained in volume as the date of partition approached.* Meanwhile, the

Hindu Majority Districts			Muslim Majority Districts		
District	1931	1941	District	1931	1941
	per cent	per cent		per cent	per cent
1. Burdwan	79	81	1. Nadia	62	61
2. Birbhum	67	72	2. Murshidabad	56	56
3. Bankura	91	95	3. Jessore	62	65
4. Midnapur	89	92	4. Rajshahi	76	74
5. Hooghly	83	84	5. Dinajpur	51	50
6. Howrah	78	79.7	6. Rangpur	71	71
7. 24-Parganas	64	66.7	7. Bogra	83	84
8. Calcutta	69	72.7	8. Pabna	77	77
9. Khulna	50.2	50.5	9. Malda	54	53
10. Jalpaiguri	67.5	75	10. Dacca	67	64
11. Darjeeling	74	84.9	11. Mymensingh	77	77
12. Cooch Behar	64	62	12. Faridpur	64	61
13. Tripura	68	74	13. Bakarganj	72	72
			14. Tippera	76	77
			15. Noakhali	78	81
			16. Chittagong	74	74

horrible news of the Punjab riots 'added to the already serious fear of Hindus in East Bengal'. Declaration of Partition of India by the then British Government and its acceptance by the Congress leaders of the country brought before long the Hindu minorities in the midst of a catastrophic situation. They were forced to take quick but definite decision in favour of migration for ever or otherwise from the proposed Dominion of Pakistan.

Radcliffe's Award offered a sensational fillip to the Hindus in general. Their hurried movements across the marches of the new State of East Pakistan turned out very quickly 'a sort of stampede'. In the first half of August, 1947, itself the movement was believed to have reached the peak period. To engender such mass uprootment of the Hindu minorities, it was reported, the command and anti-minority attitude of West Pakistan officials stationed newly in eastern portion of Pakistan was very largely and crucially responsible.

Incidentally, it may be noted that steady immigration of the Hindus from formerly East Bengal continued till 1949 'when the Government of India's decision to devalue the rupee, and

the Government of Pakistan's decision to uphold the value of rupee, led to a major *economic crisis* approaching a dangerous slump in East Bengal. A blind way of reaching to the slump in East Bengal was the touching off of a series of fresh and bloody communal outrages between December 1949 and February 1950 in that State which diverted the popular mind from the impending financial crisis to a new readily understandable engagement' (Census Report : 1951). Process of Hindu migration started from the dark days of Noakhali-Tipperah disasters and the same was highly accelerated by the official award of the Radcliffe Commission. East Pakistan officials, on the other hand, were extraordinarily dutiful to add more explosive materials in their day to day administration to bring the *progressive discordance* in the cordial relations existing for long between the *common* Hindus and Muslims of erstwhile East Bengal.

The drawing of the partition line between West Bengal and East Pakistan and for that matter between India and Pakistan, caused inevitably hundreds of thousand of persons to find themselves almost instantly 'in the role of refugees'; in a great many cases the Hindus and Muslims who had for many generations lived quietly and confidently with each other, found themselves forced off their ancestral land and with no suitable place to go for ever, often forced to sell the family properties and valuables. A great many of them suffered violence, severe hardships and privation. 'Many were killed or lost in the wave of hostility and bitterness which accompanied this *forced exodus*'. The upshot of such forced exodus was that the minorities migrated 'to join those of their own religious faith at a great distance, sometimes joining members of the family who had gone before, and sometimes without a very clear picture of a destination except in terms of some large city or region' (Murphy : 1953).

Thus, the new state of West Bengal may rightly be considered as the 'offspring of Partition'. This State had been the victim of a series of grave calamities during the decade of 1940-50. The incidence and aftermath of the Second World War, the Great Bengal Famine and lastly the bitter Riots leading to physical division of the province and ceaseless inflow of displaced Hindus from East Pakistan had truly shaken to a severe extent the very foundation of the cultural, social, economic and political structures of the State. Above all, the problems of the Displaced Persons (refugees) constituted 'the biggest and complicated of all the problems' that the Partition brought to the inhabitants

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of West Bengal. The Census of West Bengal, 1951 showed the total number of *Displaced Persons from East Bengal in the order of 20.99 lakhs*.

Contextually, one important fact has to be pointed out here that 'many persons belonging to East Bengal had been living in the territory now comprising West Bengal from long before the partition; they had their hearth and home in East Bengal and their income here, supplemented by income from land and other sources in East Bengal, gave them the necessary subsistence. These persons were not recorded as refugees in the Census of 1951, although these people, deprived of their source of income from East Bengal, became as much refugees as those who migrated in the wake of Partition. The families of these persons again gradually migrated to India and swelled the ranks of refugees' (West Bengal : Land and People : 1956).

Under the circumstances it is clear that Partition with all its disastrous social and economic consequences told heavily on a region in Eastern India which since the beginning of recorded history was regarded as one *geographical unit* with its peculiar ethnic and cultural make-up. 'Territorially, undivided Bengal (including Cooch Behar but excluding Tripura) had an area of 78,389 square miles. West Bengal has now 30,775 square miles or nearly 39 per cent of the area of undivided Bengal. According to the Demographic Year Book (United Nations) the population of East Bengal (East Pakistan) in 1951 had been 42,063,000 while that of West Bengal had been 24,810,308 or roughly in the proportion of 63 : 37, about 37 per cent of the total population of undivided Bengal now coming to West Bengal'. (W.B. Govt. : 1954). At present West Bengal as a State comprises the undernoted 15 districts : (i) Burdwan, Birbhum, Bankura, Midnapore, Hooghly and Howrah (Burdwan Division), all of which lie west of the Bhagirathi or the Hooghly River; (ii) 24 Parganas (including Sunderban Forests), Calcutta, Nadia, Murshidabad, all of which lie south of the river Ganges or Padma and east of the Hooghly river, except the Western half of Murshidabad; (iii) the districts of Malda and West Dinajpore come to the north of the Ganges; and (iv) further north, the districts of Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri, and Darjeeling. Geographical and administrative boundaries of West Bengal and her districts had newly been fixed after the implementation of Radcliffe Awards and as a result considerable areas had gone to the new State of East Pakistan.

It is known that the Congress leaders and their organization had claimed for West Bengal about 59 per cent of the area and 46 per cent of the population of the province. But, in the famous Radcliffe Award, *only 36 per cent of the area and 35 per cent of the population* were ultimately assigned to West Bengal. Of the total Muslim population of *undivided* Bengal only 16 per cent came under West Bengal, while as many as 42 per cent of *non-Muslims* remained in East Bengal. Again, it was estimated that up to the middle of 1948 about 1½ million non-Muslims crossed the border from Eastern Pakistan into West Bengal (Menon : 1957). In another source it has been noted in 1948 that 'although no record has been kept of the non-Muslim refugees from East Bengal, it is estimated that about 1,000,000 persons have crossed into West Bengal and an unknown number have gone to Assam and other parts of India' (Int. Lab. Rev. : 1948).

Contextually, it would be profitable to read what had been told in a publication of the Government of India in 1957. 'Against nearly 5 million who came from West Pakistan over 4 million have so far come from East Pakistan. The two major differences in the *two migrations* are, firstly, that *the exodus from East Pakistan has not ceased* and thousands of migrants are still entering this country for relief and rehabilitation, and secondly, that the influx from East Pakistan to India has not been balanced by a corresponding efflux from India into Pakistan. The Displaced Persons from West Pakistan were absorbed much more rapidly, because, to some extent, a vacuum had been created by the departure of Muslims. In the *eastern region* there is no such vacuum, and the Government had been faced with a monumental task of fitting those millions of Displaced Persons into an area which is almost saturated, both from the point of view of population and from the point of view of employment' (Govt. of India : 1957).

It may be noted that according to certain official statistics 3.14 million persons came as refugees from East Pakistan to West Bengal during 1947-61, and out of this number, 2.23 million settled down outside West Bengal. Of the remaining 0.73 million persons, 0.05 millions could be accounted for as inmates of Government Refugee Camps and Refugee Homes; the rest 0.68 million remained 'untraced'.

Reliable statistics regarding the volume of migration of the Displaced Persons from East Pakistan happened to be a difficult

issue right in the immediate post-partitioned period. Nevertheless, several estimates were provided for grasping the colossal movements effected by the minorities, especially the Hindus, from different districts of erstwhile East Bengal. Some of these estimates have been mentioned above and still there are some which may be noticed here to pinpoint the fluctuations in the volume of migration. It had been reported by the then Rehabilitation Minister of India that more than 56,000 refugees had arrived at different points in West Bengal during the period from January 1 to February 22, 1950. To this figure must be added 98,860 who arrived at the border stations (Bongaon and Ranaghat) between February 23 and March 8. The total became more than 1.50 lakhs (1 lakh is equal to a hundred thousand). At that period the *daily arrival* was over 15,000 at different points (Ghose & Ghose : 1950). These figures alone would at once tell what painful legacy of mass migration due to Partition was inherited by West Bengal.

To go a little further into the question of mass immigration from East Bengal immediate reference is made to a *survey* which was carried out by the Government of West Bengal between December 20 and January 15, 1951. This survey showed that since October 15, 1946, from East Bengal 21,43,228 persons came to West Bengal and 46 per cent of these migrants 'had settled in urban and 54 per cent in rural areas of the State' (State Stat. Bureau: 1951). Before these data on migration were available a report of Government of India declared that 'Displaced Persons from Eastern Pakistan were estimated to be 13 lakhs according to the Census conducted in July, 1949' (Govt. of India : 1950). Contextually, the following extract from an official report of the Government of West Bengal may be read with interest : 'the course of fluctuations in the influx of Displaced Persons into West Bengal is well-known. The population of Displaced Persons in West Bengal according to 1951 Census was about 21 lakhs, but on account of the subsequent influx due to the introduction of the passport system, the population of Displaced Persons had increased to 26 lakhs. This constitutes 1/10th of the total population in West Bengal. Further, the concentration of Displaced Persons is the largest in the three districts of 24-Parganas, Calcutta, and Nadia. These account for about 2/3rds of the total population of Displaced Persons.....' (West Bengal Govt. : 1954).

From the *Census Paper on Displaced Persons* (1951 Census)

the volumes of the migrants from East Pakistan are neatly discernible. From this official publication it is gathered that total Displaced Persons in West Bengal (including Chundernagore)

Area where migrated	Year of arrival						Total no. of migrants
	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	
India	2.3	18.2	19.2	12.8	46.0	1.5	100.0 (2549390)
East India	2.3	17.7	19.2	12.9	46.4	1.5	100.0 (2523115)
West Bengal	2.1	18.3	20.2	13.2	44.7	1.5	100.0 (2076338)

amounted to 21,04,241 and of this staggering number only 0.5 per cent reported to have come from some parts of West Pakistan only, while for 0.8 per cent origin of migration could not be ascertained. This means that by 1951 Census period 98.7 per cent of the Displaced Persons of West Bengal came exclusively from different areas of formerly East Bengal. 49.9 per cent of these Displaced Persons migrated to rural areas only, while the rest went to urban areas only, of the State. Numerical strength of the Displaced Persons (refugees) from East Pakistan in West Bengal could be ascertained for the first time on national level in the Census-operation of 1951. Before this, various estimates were calculated no doubt, but nothing could be pronounced authoritatively to measure the *magnitude of forced migration* from East Pakistan.

In the same official publication as noted just above, the remarks on *the nature of movement* of the minorities from East Pakistan run as follows: 'A little less than one-half of the movement of Displaced Persons from East Pakistan took place during 1950, ... Less than a fifth of the movement took place in each of the two years 1947 and 1948'. In this context the details of refugee movement per year between 1946 and 1951 (Feb.) are also available from the relevant official statistics.

Year	Number per 1000 displaced persons	
	during the year	upto the year
1946	23	23
1947	182	205
1948	193	398
1949	128	526
1950	459	985
rest upto Feb. 1951	15	1000

It is further noted that in East India the 'number of Displaced Persons in *villages* is somewhat higher than in the *towns*', and number of Displaced Persons per 1000 local population (excluding Displaced Persons) of West Bengal was 92 in 1951. On the other hand, *density of population of Displaced Persons per sq. mile* for the State of West Bengal was shown to be 68 in 1951 and the same varied from 3.5 in Bankura district to 13.404 in Calcutta district. As a matter of fact, 70 per cent of the total Displaced Persons concentrated in Calcutta and her industrial areas, 24-Parganas and Nadia. By 1951 the nature and extent of refugee-concentrations in different districts of West Bengal may be noted in this context.

West Bengal District, 1951	Density per District
1. Birbhum	6.8
2. Midnapore	6.4
3. Darjeeling	13.1
4. Murshidabad	28.3
5. Burdwan	35.5
6. Cooch Behar	75.5
7. West Dinajpore	83.4
8. 24-Parganas	93.0
9. Howrah	109.1
10. Nadia	282.9

Actual distribution of the Displaced Persons over fifteen districts of West Bengal (1951) is shown hereafter to record differential migration of the people in question within the State and this picture of distribution portrays the volume of impouring migrants from Pakistan in general to West Bengal.

In continuation with the statistical information about the numerical strength of the Displaced Persons in West Bengal (1954) it would be of interest to know that the Government of India had meanwhile shown the number of Displaced Persons in West Bengal (1960) to be in the order of 31,32,008 and of this total 15,62,000 were reported to have gone in *rural* areas only of the State. In explaining the given figure it was noted that the figures concerned were given according to the latest figures compiled up to December, 1958, and necessary adjustments were made on account of dispersal of Displaced Persons from one State to another for rehabilitation. Contextually, the number of

displaced families from East Pakistan settling into West Bengal by 31 December, 1960 was shown to be 455.0 thousands.

West Bengal District (1951)	Displaced Persons (in thousand)
	9
1. Bankura	34
2. Midnapore	51
3. Hooghly	61
4. Howrah	527
5. 24-Parganas	433
6. Calcutta	927
7. Nadia	59
8. Murshidabad	60
9. Malda	115
10. West Dinajpur	99
11. Jalpaiguri	16
12. Darjeeling	100
13. Cooch Behar	96
14. Burdwan	12
15. Birbhum	
WEST BENGAL Total : 2,099	

A Statistical Survey of the refugees of West Bengal was undertaken for the second time by the Government of West Bengal 'to make a correct assessment of the size of the problem of rehabilitation'. The report of the survey shows that 563,748 refugee families including 2,723,869 persons were present in different districts of the State till May, 1955. It should be noted concurrently that the above number of refugee families did not include the dwellers of Government camps. Together with the families living in Government camps the total number of families was found to be 608.1 (000). The Survey report contains that 'it may be noted that the numbers.....refer to migrants who were found in the State at the time of survey and *do not show* the total numbers who had actually migrated to West Bengal since 1946. The estimates do not include deaths which have occurred since, nor the migrants who had either been settled in other States or had gone back to Pakistan' (W.B. Govt. : 1956).

From the same official source it is gathered that 'the number of migrants who had actually come over, excluding those who had since gone back to Pakistan, might therefore be taken as

about 2,609.0 (000), at the time of the survey, that is April-May, 1955'. Earlier a preponderance of refugee families (migrant) in rural areas was noticed during the survey of 1950-51 and it has been remarked in the report in question that 'the difference in numbers at that time being of the order of 10 per cent, indicating that *since 1950 there has been an appreciable movement of migrants from rural to urban areas*' within the State. In 1950 survey male migrants of the refugee families concerned constituted 52.6 per cent of the total, whereas in 1955 survey male members of all migrant families accounted for 52.4 per cent. In 1951 Census male population excluding migrants was shown to have accounted for 54.2 per cent in the State of West Bengal. It will be noticed immediately that the *sex-ratio* for the refugees remained almost on the same level as was found in 1950.

Important official statistics are quoted below to indicate the actual distribution of migrant families, total numbers and migrants in West Bengal (1955).

The given statistical table speaks volume for itself and one can readily understand the magnitude of refugee-migration from Pakistan between October 1, 1946 and July, 1955. The cumulative addition of the Displaced Persons to the general population of West Bengal had, thus, taken place inordinately to make the problems of relief and rehabilitation of the refugees most acute and exciting.

From the given statistics one point becomes crystal clear that the in-flow of the Displaced Persons from East Pakistan to West Bengal varied greatly between 1946 and 1950 and in subsequent years. It has been found from Census Report for 1951 that of all the migrants from East Pakistan only 1.4 per cent came in 1946 and the volume of migration steadily increased in later years till the time of population-count on national level in 1951. 37 per cent of the total Displaced Persons who were found in the State (except Calcutta) reported that they had arrived within the years of 1946 and 1948, while as high as 49 per cent informed that *exclusively* 1950 was the year of their arrival. In the immediate background of all tragic events caused by the Great Calcutta Killing of August 16, 1946, communal disasters in Noakhali, Tipperah, Bihar and the Punjab the millions were on the move, leaving their ancestral holdings, fertile lands and traditional habitats.

The enforced mass migration of millions of people amid bitter violence, arson, murder and looting posed the greatest social-

District of West Bengal	Numbers in thousand				
	families			total members	migr- ants*
	single member	others	total		
I. Outside Govt. camps :					
1. Burdwan	3.8	25.7	29.5	124.3	100.4
2. Birbhum	1.0	3.0	4.0	16.3	12.8
3. Bankura	0.6	2.0	2.6	10.2	7.9
4. Midnapore	1.4	7.1	8.5	40.2	30.9
5. Howrah	1.3	15.0	16.3	82.1	64.6
6. Hooghly	1.4	15.9	17.3	93.8	74.2
7. 24-Parganas	9.5	128.6	138.1	704.3	569.0
8. Calcutta	10.2	94.2	104.4	570.9	446.1
9. Nadia	7.3	98.5	105.8	466.6	386.5
10. Murshidabad	1.6	14.2	15.8	72.7	58.9
11. West Dinajpore	2.4	29.1	31.5	146.1	123.6
12. Malda	1.1	14.8	15.9	72.5	60.4
13. Jalpaiguri	3.7	29.8	33.5	150.2	124.6
14. Darjeeling	0.7	5.2	5.9	30.1	23.7
15. Cooch Behar	3.1	31.5	34.6	143.6	124.7
Total :	49.1	514.6	563.7	2723.9	2208.3
II. In Govt. camps:	2.4	42.0	44.4	166.5	159.7
Grand Total (I + II)	51.5	556.6	608.1	2890.4	2368.0

* Migrants were those who 'actually came over from Pakistan, excluding deaths and the numbers settled in other States as well as those who had gone back to Pakistan'. The total number of such migrants in Govt. camps and outside Govt. camps was estimated to be 2368.0 (000).

Source : Table 1 from *Rehabilitation of Refugees* (W. B. Govt.).

political problems to the Government of India right after the act of Partition and Radcliffe Award. In that critical hours the Government felt the pressing need for having adequate and essential information about the migrants who had had to leave their homes, properties, valuables and 'come into strange surroundings in the utter wretchedness of spirit and with a complete frustration of all hopes and vitality'. Relief and rehabilitation of these migrants became the cardinal task for both the officials and the non-officials. But in those painful days immediately before and after Partition no authority was in a position to predict and

assess surely the number of migrants and their general socio-economic conditions. Under the circumstances, a Ministry for the Relief and Rehabilitation of the refugees was urgently organised by the Government of India on September 6, 1947. This official move was highly essential to offer the required justice and assistance to those who were caused to be the direct victims of Partition and subsequent forced eviction from Pakistan.

In October, 1949 a high-power committee was set up by the Ministry of Rehabilitation, Government of India, to tackle all problems arising out of a large migration of minority population between India and Pakistan. Later on, in 1952 a fact-finding Committee was appointed at the instant of the Government of India 'to make a survey and assessment of the conditions in relief camps and rehabilitation colonies, in particular of housing and gainful employment provided for and vocational and technical training given to the displaced persons in West Bengal and the results of various other rehabilitation measures undertaken by Government'. This fact-finding Committee was in fact a body of Ministers. In harmony of these official measures the Government of West Bengal carried out a sample survey in 1950 for estimating the socio-economic characteristics of the Displaced Persons. In this survey 'all persons migrating from Pakistan since the 15th October, 1946 up-to-date of the survey were defined as displaced persons' and the *refugees in Government Camps were excluded*. A rich fund of information about the displaced persons was available to throw light especially on the nature and volume of migration between October, 1946 and January, 1951. Several estimates were provided in the said report of the Survey.

Next important source of information about the Displaced Persons is the Census Report on displaced persons of 1951. Displaced persons of West Bengal were enumerated thoroughly in the State during the general census operation among the inhabitants of the State and several important statistics of the migrants came to light. In Census-operation a 'displaced person' was, of course, defined as 'a persons who came to India (having left or been compelled to leave his home in Western Pakistan on or after the 1st March, 1947 or his home in Eastern Pakistan, on or after the 15th October, 1946), on account of civil disturbances or the fear of such disturbances or on account of the setting up of the two Dominions of India and Pakistan'

(Census of India: 1951). Quantitative information about the displaced persons available in the said Census Report serves very efficiently a great social-cum-administrative need of the contemporary period. Socio-economic conditions and nature of migration of the displaced persons have vividly been portrayed in this Report to pinpoint the salient characteristics of the refugee-migrants in contrast to the general population of the country as a whole. For any consideration of the life and living of the displaced families of West Bengal between the years of 1946 and 1950 the said Report of the Government of India remains as a pioneer source.

Since the *first-round* survey of the refugees of West Bengal by the State Statistical Bureau in 1950-51 the socio-political position of the State changed considerably with the growing accumulation of more and more displaced individuals in the subsequent years. Under the circumstances, the Bureau carried out the *second-round* survey of the refugee families of the State in the middle of 1955 to help make 'a correct assessment of the size of the problem of rehabilitation'. The report encompassing the findings of the second survey provides with many interesting facts and figures about the refugees and in comparison with the findings of 1950 survey this second report goes a long way to depict several socio-demographic changes—small or big—which had meanwhile taken place among the uprooted families from East Pakistan. Nature of migration from East Pakistan and again, within West Bengal had elegantly been analysed together with other social and economic factors of utmost importance. This official report of 1956 marshals information about all refugees who were then living outside or inside Government camps of the State.

The above reports, official records, publications and literatures may freely be consulted to gather a better understanding of the displaced persons of West Bengal. But, it should be noted that whatever data and information one may draw from the said sources the condition of the refugees *immediately after the partition* cannot obviously be understood from the same. As no early attempt was made to collect systematic information about the migrants and their families either in the last quarter of 1947 or first quarter of 1948 the *initial* state of affairs related to the refugees shall ever remain unknown. It was only in May, 1948 a scientific investigation into the life and living of the refugees of

West Bengal was for the first time initiated by the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), Calcutta, at the instant of both the Government of India and the Government of West Bengal.

The Indian Statistical Institute's Survey of the refugee population in the middle of 1948 collected relevant socio-economic data from those uprooted families who might be considered as constituting the *oldest* migrant group from erstwhile East Bengal. This group was formed, according to an estimate, by as many as 13,35,347 souls who were found living then outside Government camps in the State. It has been written in the Report of this Survey that it would not be far out to estimate that the said figure would 'give the numerical strength of refugees as on or about 31st August, 1948. This is only a rough estimate.....' Sociological analysis of these people in particular is, indeed, greatly liable to offer a useful understanding of the refugee-situation that was prevailing immediately after the Partition in 1947-48. In 1950 and following years several enquiries were, of course, made to reveal the socio-economic and psychological conditions of the displaced persons. But, to know about those who in the wake of catastrophic circumstances attended upon the partition—business arrived immediately in West Bengal as the direct victims of communal disasters as well as governmental changes in East Bengal, no source other than the Indian Statistical Institute's Survey Report (Chakravarti : 1949) would satisfy anyone.

Lastly, it is noted that Tables 2.1 to 2.7 have been appended below to offer several statistics on refugee-migrations. The quantitative pictures of migration have been offered in different scientific writings and publications in different years. A careful perusal of these data reveals at once the varying magnitude and extent of forced migration of the minorities from Pakistan in general and East Pakistan in particular. Community-wise migrations of the refugees have also been presented. Moreover, the modes of migration from within several districts of erstwhile East Bengal or within different districts of West Bengal have been especially shown here. Sex-wise migrations of the displaced persons over fifteen districts of West Bengal between 1946 and 1950 have been recorded in consonance with 1951 Census Report. Besides these estimates and data on refugee migrations the Indian Statistical Institute's Survey Report gives a separate but most useful estimate for those refugees who came to West Bengal before the end of August, 1948.

Table 2.1 : Percentage distribution of migrants living in West Bengal by period of migration between 15 October, 1946 and 15 January, 1951.

Districts of West Bengal, 1951	number of refugee families having one or more migrants.	total migrants since 15 Oct. '46 up-to-date (15 Jan. '51)	migrants since 31 Dec. '49 up-to-date (15 Jan. 1951)	number of refugee families in West Bengal over		
				urban areas of the district	rural areas of the district	total (percentage and number)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1. Burdwan	5.7	4.7	3.3	31.2	68.8	100.0(24616)
2. Birbhum	0.6	0.5	0.5	40.7	59.3	100.0(2655)
3. Bankura	0.5	0.5	0.5	24.7	75.3	100.0(2294)
4. Midnapur	1.4	1.3	0.5	53.9	46.1	100.0(6058)
5. Howrah	3.9	4.0	4.1	14.3	85.7	100.0(16827)
6. Hooghly	2.8	3.0	2.4	58.2	41.8	100.0(12115)
7. 24-Parganas	23.8	25.3	22.2	55.7	44.3	100.0(100564)
8. Calcutta	17.7	19.4	14.9	100.0	—	100.0(76078)
9. Nadia	19.8	18.8	22.3	15.1	84.9	100.0(84913)
10. Murshidabad	3.4	3.1	2.7	45.0	55.0	100.0(14424)
11. West Dinajpur	6.4	6.3	9.1	16.6	83.4	100.0(27305)
12. Malda	3.5	3.2	4.7	13.7	86.3	100.0(14876)
13. Jalpaiguri	4.8	4.7	5.4	19.6	80.4	100.0(20596)
14. Darjeeling	0.8	0.8	0.7	58.8	41.2	100.0(3425)
15. Cooch Behar	5.3	4.4	6.7	16.1	83.9	100.0(22526)
16. all districts :	100.0	100.0	100.0	44.2	55.8	100.0(429272)
total number :	(429272)	(2143228)	(1200479)			

Source : State Statistical Bureau (West Bengal): *Report*, 1951—
Table A, p. 13.

Table 2.2 : Percentage distribution of migrant Hindu families from any district of East Pakistan by district in West Bengal in which they migrated before 16 January, 1951.

Districts of West Bengal to which refugees migrated																	
Districts in East Pakistan from which refugees migrated	Burdwan	Birbhum	Bankura	Midnapore	Howrah	Hooghly	24-Parganas	Calcutta	Nadia	Murshidabad	West Dinajpur	Malda	Jalpaiguri	Darjeeling	Cooch-Behar	West Bengal, 1951-number (100.0)	Percentage of Hindus migrated from each district under Col. (1)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)
1. Jessore	3.0	0.9	0.4	0.4	1.9	2.8	41.2	13.2	33.0	1.1	0.4	0.3	0.8	0.6	—	29939	7.0
2. Khulna	1.9	0.3	0.5	0.6	3.9	2.0	63.3	17.1	7.5	0.9	0.2	0.7	0.8	0.1	0.2	23817	5.5
3. Faridpur	8.1	0.7	0.7	1.7	3.4	3.8	27.0	23.3	21.5	2.4	0.7	2.7	2.3	0.6	1.1	49750	11.6
4. Barisal	8.7	1.4	1.7	1.9	6.7	3.7	39.8	25.5	6.2	0.9	0.5	1.6	1.0	0.1	0.3	45902	10.7
5. Dacca	5.9	0.5	0.5	1.9	6.8	4.3	25.4	30.3	11.8	1.7	2.3	0.5	4.1	0.8	3.2	76732	17.9
6. Mymensingh	4.7	1.0	0.3	1.9	2.7	3.0	16.3	12.1	6.4	1.8	5.7	0.9	13.9	1.8	27.5	27078	6.3
7. Kusthia (Nadia)	1.2	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.9	3.9	2.0	85.4	4.3	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.1	41765	9.7
8. Rangpur	0.3	0.1	0.1	1.1	0.3	0.6	4.1	3.1	0.5	0.1	4.2	0.2	26.4	4.9	54.0	19695	4.6
9. Pabna	3.7	0.7	0.3	1.4	2.6	2.2	14.9	11.4	22.2	16.9	11.1	4.8	4.5	1.0	2.3	17070	4.0
10. Bogra	0.6	—	0.6	0.9	0.3	1.3	1.2	5.2	3.1	0.6	72.5	0.8	3.3	0.3	9.3	7615	1.8
11. Dinajpur	0.6	—	—	0.2	0.2	—	1.1	2.1	0.4	0.2	77.1	0.6	15.4	2.1	—	10752	2.5
12. Rajshahi	1.8	0.4	—	0.2	0.6	0.9	2.2	2.7	6.1	18.3	24.2	40.7	1.4	0.2	0.3	26103	6.1
13. Noakhali	24.7	0.9	0.5	2.8	6.6	3.6	22.9	15.9	17.9	1.3	0.6	0.6	1.6	0.1	—	18140	4.2

(Contd.)

Table 2.2 (contd.)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)
14. Tipperah	11.1	0.9	0.6	2.4	7.1	4.5	24.0	27.6	18.1	1.7	0.2	0.3	0.9	0.4	0.2	21144	4.9
15. Chittagong	7.1	0.6	0.3	3.3	9.6	4.5	23.2	40.3	3.6	1.2	0.9	0.5	3.7	0.6	0.6	7978	1.8
16. Sylhet	8.0	—	—	2.5	9.4	1.4	23.6	43.9	4.3	4.3	—	—	2.7	—	—	1692	0.4
17. Hill Chittagong	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	100	—	—	—	21	0.0
18. Malda	—	—	—	—	—	8.4	—	8.3	—	58.9	16.5	7.4	—	—	—	285	0.1
19. Jalpaiguri	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	100	—	—	2417	0.6
20. West Pakistan	17.6	—	—	4.1	12.7	—	15.8	45.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	4.5	1037	0.2
21. Unrecorded	—	—	—	—	—	—	34.4	65.6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	340	0.1
22. All districts :	5.7	0.6	0.5	1.4	3.9	2.8	23.4	17.7	19.8	3.4	6.4	3.5	4.8	0.8	5.3	429272	100.0(429272)

Source : State Statistical Bureau (West Bengal), Report, 1951—Table 1, p. 14.

Table 2.3 : Percentage distribution of migrant Hindu and other families belonging to different communities by district of origin in East Pakistan, (1951).

District of origin in East Pakistan	community-affiliation of migrant families				total
	caste Hindu	scheduled caste Hindu	scheduled tribes	others	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Jessore	6.1	10.8	0.9	3.2	7.0
2. Khulna	5.3	7.0	0.7	—	5.5
3. Faridpur	10.7	16.3	1.5	4.7	11.6
4. Barisal	12.1	6.5	0.9	11.6	10.7
5. Dacca	20.2	11.5	—	8.2	17.9
6. Mymensingh	7.5	2.6	0.2	8.0	6.3
7. Kusthia (Nadia)	9.3	12.3	1.3	9.6	9.7
8. Rangpur	4.1	6.9	2.6	1.6	4.6
9. Pabna	3.6	5.7	0.7	6.0	4.0
10. Bogra	1.4	1.9	12.5	1.6	1.8
11. Dinajpur	1.3	3.6	30.3	—	2.5
12. Rajshahi	4.1	8.3	48.4	7.1	6.1
13. Noakhali	5.1	1.8	—	1.6	4.2
14. Tippierrah	5.7	2.8	—	1.6	4.9
15. Chittagong	2.3	0.2	—	17.7	1.8
16. Sylhet	0.5	0.1	—	—	0.4
17. Hill Chittagong	0.0	—	—	—	0.0
18. Malda	0.1	0.1	—	—	0.1
19. Jalpaiguri	0.3	1.5	—	—	0.6
20. records not available	0.1	0.0	—	—	0.1
21. West Pakistan	0.2	0.1	—	17.5	0.2
22. All districts :	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(number of families)	(327967)	(89140)	(10682)	(1483)	(429272)

Note : Only 21 Hindu families migrated from Hill Chittagong. Of 23 scheduled caste Hindu families no records were available to show district of origin.

Source : State Statistical Bureau (West Bengal): Report, 1951—Table 6, p. 20.

Table 2.4 : Percentage-distributions of the migrants (refugees) from East Bengal (East Pakistan) over different districts of West Bengal between 1946 and 1950.

West Bengal districts	Hindu migrants from East Bengal by year of arrival					
	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1. Darjeeling	1.0	22.4	28.0	14.3	34.3	100.0(15400)
2. Jalpaiguri	1.1	14.1	19.2	16.1	48.9	100.0(96078)
3. West Dinajpur	0.3	6.5	13.2	11.8	68.2	100.0(110791)
4. Malda	0.4	7.3	8.8	10.5	73.0	100.0(59046)
5. Murshidabad	0.2	12.1	16.3	9.6	61.8	100.0(94148)
6. Nadia	1.4	11.3	17.8	15.6	53.9	100.0(418163)
7. 24-Parganas	1.9	19.8	21.9	13.3	43.1	100.0(514890)
8. Howrah	2.8	25.4	18.8	13.7	39.3	100.0(59800)
9. Hooghly	2.0	21.4	23.7	14.3	38.6	100.0(50526)
10. Midnapur	1.8	37.7	35.4	10.0	15.1	100.0(32926)
11. Bankura	0.8	21.9	11.0	5.9	60.4	100.0(9232)
12. Burdwan	2.1	23.9	25.6	14.9	33.5	100.0(93187)
13. Birbhum	3.8	26.8	19.9	10.2	39.3	100.0(11010)
All districts*:	1.4	16.3	19.6	13.7	49.0	100.0(1565197)

* Figures for Calcutta and Cooch Behar districts are to be considered to get the final total of migrants.

Source : West Bengal District Hand-books : 1951 Census.

Table 2.5 : Modes of concentration of the migrants (refugees) from East Bengal (East Pakistan) in different districts of West Bengal between 1946 and 1950.

West Bengal	migrants (refugees) from East Bengal by year of arrival												Total (1946-50) percentage and number
	1946		1947		1948		1949		1950		total		
	percentage male	percentage female	percentage male	percentage female	percentage male	percentage female	percentage male	percentage female	percentage male	percentage female			
district (1951)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
1. Darjeeling	0.5	0.5	12.8	9.6	16.2	11.8	8.0	6.3	19.1	15.2	56.6	43.4	100.0(15400)
2. Jalpaiguri	0.9	0.8	7.7	6.4	10.5	8.7	9.0	7.1	26.7	22.2	54.8	45.2	100.0(96078)
3. West Dinajpur	0.2	0.1	3.4	3.1	5.7	7.5	5.1	6.7	38.4	29.8	52.8	47.2	100.0(110791)
4. Malda	0.2	0.2	3.9	3.4	4.3	4.5	5.4	5.1	37.5	35.5	51.3	48.7	100.0(59046)
5. Murshidabad	0.1	0.1	6.4	5.7	8.9	7.4	5.0	4.6	32.8	29.0	53.2	46.8	100.0(94148)
6. Nadia	0.7	0.7	6.2	5.1	9.7	8.1	7.6	8.0	27.5	26.4	51.7	48.3	100.0(418163)
7. 24-Parganas	1.1	0.8	10.8	9.0	11.5	10.4	7.5	5.8	23.2	19.9	54.1	45.9	100.0(514890)
8. Howrah	1.7	1.1	13.9	11.5	10.6	8.2	6.9	6.8	21.0	18.3	54.0	46.0	100.0(59800)
9. Hooghly	1.2	0.8	11.6	9.8	12.2	11.5	5.2	9.1	22.4	16.2	52.6	47.4	100.0(50526)
10. Midnapore	1.0	0.8	20.6	17.1	15.7	19.7	5.5	4.5	8.9	6.2	51.7	48.3	100.0(32926)
11. Bankura	0.2	0.6	12.2	9.7	5.4	5.6	3.2	2.7	30.8	29.6	51.8	48.2	100.0(9232)
12. Burdwan	1.5	0.6	13.1	10.8	13.6	12.0	8.0	6.9	17.0	16.5	53.2	46.8	100.0(93187)
13. Birbhum	2.7	1.1	15.6	11.2	10.7	9.2	4.0	6.2	20.2	19.1	53.2	46.8	100.0(11010)
* All districts :	0.8	0.6	8.9	7.4	10.3	9.3	7.1	6.6	26.0	23.0	53.1	46.9	100.0(1565197)

* Figures for Calcutta and Cooch Behar districts are to be

Source: West Bengal District Hand-books: 1951 Census. considered to get the final number of migrants in the State.

Table 2.6 : Districtwise distribution of migrant families, total members* and migrants* in rural and urban areas of West Bengal (1955)

District	families in urban areas					families in rural areas					size of family	
	single member	others	total	total members	migrants	single member	others	total	total members	migrants	including member	excluding member
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
1. Burdwan	1.4	8.7	10.1	47.7	38.8	2.4	17.0	19.4	76.6	61.6	4.2	4.7
2. Birbhum	0.3	1.4	1.7	8.4	6.4	0.7	1.6	2.3	7.9	6.4	4.1	5.1
3. Bankura	0.3	0.8	1.1	4.7	3.6	0.3	1.2	1.5	5.5	4.3	3.9	4.8
4. Midnapore	0.7	4.0	4.7	23.5	18.0	0.7	3.1	3.8	16.7	12.9	4.7	5.5
5. Howrah	0.9	11.0	11.9	58.9	46.8	0.4	4.0	4.4	3.2	17.8	5.0	5.4
6. Hooghly	0.5	8.2	8.7	50.2	38.7	0.9	7.7	8.6	43.6	35.5	5.4	5.8
7. 24-Parganas	4.4	62.6	67.0	361.5	287.9	5.1	66.0	71.7	342.8	281.1	5.1	5.4
8. Calcutta	10.2	94.2	104.4	570.9	446.1	—	—	—	—	—	5.5	6.0
9. Nadia	1.6	18.7	20.3	95.3	77.9	5.7	79.8	85.5	371.3	308.6	4.4	4.7
10. Murshidabad	0.4	3.4	3.8	20.0	15.9	1.2	10.8	12.0	52.7	43.0	4.6	5.0
11. West Dinajpur	0.7	5.8	6.5	32.3	26.9	1.7	23.3	25.0	113.8	96.7	4.6	4.9
12. Malda	0.2	1.8	2.0	12.0	9.5	0.9	13.0	13.9	60.5	50.9	4.6	4.8
13. Jalpaiguri	0.6	4.2	4.8	26.0	21.1	3.1	25.6	28.7	124.2	103.5	4.5	4.9
14. Darjeeling	0.4	3.5	3.9	21.1	16.6	0.3	1.7	2.0	9.0	7.1	5.1	5.7
15. Cooch Behar	0.4	3.2	3.6	18.6	15.3	2.7	28.3	31.0	125.0	109.4	4.2	4.5
16. All districts :	23.0	31.5	254.5	1351.1	1069.5	26.1	283.1	309.2	1372.8	1138.8	4.8	5.2

* (Number in thousand)

Note: These figures relate to those displaced persons who were enumerated outside Government camps.
Source : State Statistical Bureau, West Bengal, Report, 1956 — Table 1.

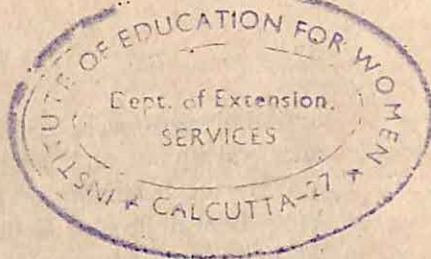
Table 2.7 : Districtwise distribution of migrant families** and their members** by community in West Bengal (1955)

District	total			Hindu (general)			scheduled caste			scheduled tribe			others	
	families		members	families		members	families		members	families		members	families	members
	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
1. Burdwan	29.5	124.3	23.3	100.3	6.0	23.4	*	0.1	0.2	0.5				
2. Birbhum	4.0	16.3	3.4	14.3	0.6	1.9	*	0.1	*	*				
3. Bankura	2.6	10.2	2.2	8.8	0.4	1.3	—	—	*	0.1				
4. Midnapore	8.5	40.2	8.1	38.5	0.4	1.7	—	—	*	*				
5. Howrah	16.3	82.1	15.3	78.0	1.0	3.9	—	—	*	0.2				
6. Hooghly	17.3	93.8	12.9	70.0	4.4	23.5	—	—	*	0.3				
7. 24 Parganas	138.1	704.3	103.4	553.1	33.8	147.6	0.1	0.7	0.8	2.9				
8. Calcutta	104.4	570.9	100.7	556.6	3.3	13.6	—	—	0.4	1.7				
9. Nadia	105.8	466.6	73.3	332.8	32.0	132.0	*	0.1	0.5	1.7				
10. Murshidabad	15.8	72.7	8.5	42.3	6.8	28.1	0.2	0.8	0.3	1.5				
11. West Dinajpore	31.5	146.1	16.1	77.8	11.2	47.5	4.2	20.6	*	0.2				
12. Malda	15.9	72.5	6.4	32.1	7.1	29.9	2.4	10.4	*	0.1				
13. Jalpaiguri	33.5	150.2	22.0	103.2	11.4	46.5	*	0.1	0.1	0.4				
14. Darjeeling	5.9	30.1	5.1	26.3	0.8	3.5	*	0.3	*	*				
15. Cooch Behar	34.6	143.6	22.9	98.3	11.6	44.6	*	0.2	0.1	0.5				
16. All districts:	563.7	2723.9	423.6	2131.4	130.8	549.0	6.9	33.4	2.4	10.1				

** (Numbers in thousand)

Note : These figures relate to those displaced persons who were enumerated outside Government Camps.

Source : State Statistical Bureau, West Bengal, Report, 1956, Table 2.



CHAPTER 3

GENESIS OF THE FIRST SURVEY OF WEST BENGAL REFUGEES

Emboldened by the electoral success in July, 1946 and infuriated with both the British Government's and/or the Indian National Congress's 'tampering' with the original Cabinet Mission Plan, the Muslim League disowned the Plan and averted to its previous policy of bargaining. Moreover, to ensure such policy a programme of active agitation was initiated by the ardent followers of the League. An All-India 'Direct Action Day' was staged to show the Congress and the British rulers that the Muslims 'would have their "homeland" even at the cost of civil war. The scarcely disguised passion of the religious-cum-political street mobs erupted in unprecedented bloodshed'. As a result, Calcutta experienced terrible riots, mass killing, and disruptions in all directions and the city was practically beyond civil control for sometime. 'The hard-pressed authorities themselves divided and tired of war and the thankless lot of the referees, faltered. Civil war became the journalist's prediction for the immediate future' (Wilcox : 1963).

On the other side, after the Noakhali-Tipperah disasters (1946) in *undivided* Bengal the mass migration of the Hindus and the other non-Muslims started notably from about February, 1947. In the very beginning the minorities of erstwhile East Bengal began to move out of their places of regular residence in slow pace and marked time to see the future developments. But, uncertainty about the exact line of demarcation between the proposed two Dominions within undivided Bengal caused steady deterioration of mental stability of the minorities in that situation. Meanwhile Lahore riots 'paid a heavy price for the political differences of the citizens'. The sorry tale of mass murder and arson which was to be followed quickly by the tragic events of Noakhali, Bihar and the Punjab added enormously to growing apprehensions of the Hindus in formerly East Bengal. The stream of migration gained in volume and reached its peak period in the first half of the month of August, 1947. Violence of every description made life for minorities virtually intolerable

and thousands were compelled to part *permanently* with their ancestral homes and natal villages.

By the beginning of 1948-49 Calcutta and other districts of West Bengal became flooded with refugees (displaced persons) who did not dare any longer to stay back in the territory of insecurity and deprivation. Concentrations of the displaced persons were becoming more and more acute in those places which were comparatively easily approachable. Calcutta being the terminal point of the main railway link between East Pakistan and West Bengal offered greater attraction for the incoming bewildered mass of minorities and the important towns—small or big—lying on the route of the railway transport concerned received also considerable number of such migrants from East Pakistan. Since the date of Partition tragic and terrible happenings in the shape of arson, loot and murder were mounting in small or large degrees all over the new Muslim dominion. Currently, the same accelerated the pace of flight and swelled the volume of migration of the non-Muslim population from East Pakistan.

The Government of West Bengal as well as the Government of India were, thus, extraordinarily confronted with numerous problems of these refugee migrants. But to initiate any fruitful measures in solving their problems one has to know obviously the number of the migrants and their general social and economic conditions before and after migration. In early months of 1948 no authority was in a position to assess or predict about the magnitude of displaced persons and their life-conditions in different districts of West Bengal. Government machinery was otherwise busy to look after the new set-up of the State in independent India and the millions of migrant added more pressing problems amongst many others. Acts of violence continued unabating and one disaster followed another, each producing a reaction in different parts of two new dominions. A vicious circle was in motion and communal tensions drove out more and more of the minority communities off their ancestral homes. The refugees were continually pouring in and thereby it was naturally not possible to indicate the number of refugees in the whole province of West Bengal 'on any given date' of the year in question.

Under this turmoil-ridden situation the Government of India decided to take help and cooperation from the Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta, in making a systematic as well as scientific

enumeration of those displaced persons who as the *first contingent of victims* had already arrived in West Bengal by the beginning of 1948. The Institute made immediate arrangements 'to collect valid information' of these migrant-victims in the State. Originally two alternative schemes of *sample survey* of the displaced persons were footed by the Institute to the Government of India. These schemes for necessary sample survey were thought to be based on 'geographical area samples'. The Government of India approved the *first* scheme of the Institute which contemplated a survey of refugee families *only* from different towns and villages of West Bengal.

Thus, a concerted effort towards population-count of the displaced persons only in West Bengal was *for the first time* promoted. In this direction it was at the very outset presumed that the density of refugee population in Calcutta, suburbs of Calcutta, larger and smaller towns and important market-villages and in ordinary villages would obviously differ, though, no basic information was then available to indicate the nature of this density. To facilitate the proposed scientific survey of the displaced persons of West Bengal (1947-48) some *ad hoc* information was soon collected to understand first-hand the pattern of distribution as well as concentration of the migrants. After a very careful examination of all information thus available, it was decided to institute the survey of the displaced families over a number of *strata* in the whole of West Bengal. The strata constituted the following distinct areas :

Stratum I :

- (1) Calcutta (Corporation) area.
- (2) Howrah City.
- (3) Industrial suburbs of Calcutta in the districts of 24-Parganas, Howrah and Hooghly.

Stratum II :

- (4) Larger *towns* which were reported to have a fairly larger number of refugee population.
- (5) Smaller *towns* and *townships* reported to have a limited number of refugees, which were considered to be capable of being completely surveyed.
- (6) Other *towns* and *townships* reported to have an appreciable number of refugees.

Stratum III :

- (7) *Rural* areas not covered by the above.

At the same time it was decided to exclude refugee colonies.

and concentration camps from the proposed sample survey. It was thought that the details about the inmates of such refugee colonies would be available from the Government records.

On the basis of the stratification of areas as pointed out above, the Indian Statistical Institute enumerated the number and enquired into socio-economic condition of the refugee-migrants in their post-migrational areas of settlement—rural, urban or city—within West Bengal. As a result, from Calcutta and Howrah City areas 5051 family units, from town areas including industrial suburbs 9550 family units and from rural areas 2435 family units were enumerated for assessing their social and economic condition in the *immediate* post-partition period.

In the said survey the hill areas of Darjeeling district and Reserve forest were left out of any consideration, as there were then no refugees in these territories. Again, it was found that some of the larger and smaller police stations were not adequately represented at the time of drawing requisite samples. 'This necessitated a further increase in the number of samples resulting 1218 samples being ultimately selected from 206 rural police station areas. 1184 of these were eventually actually surveyed. The rest being left out for various reasons'.

Before launching the actual enumeration of the displaced persons throughout West Bengal one most important technical point related to the appropriate *definition of refugees* was given due attention. The valid questions cropped up in this effect: Who should be treated as refugee in West Bengal? What should be the obvious criteria to identify a refugee? What should be the precise time-reference to declare a persons as displaced migrant? Satisfactory answers to these queries ensured, no doubt, the validity of the findings of the proposed enquiry. On May 29, 1948 the following Government communication was released to explain the criteria by which a person should be defined and appraised as 'refugee' in West Bengal:

'A refugee is a person:

- (a) who, being displaced from any area outside India on account of civil disturbances or fear of such disturbances, has settled and is engaged or intends to engage in any business or industry in India; or
- (b) who, having had his business, industry or property, wholly or partially outside India, has lost, wholly or partially, such business, industry or property on account

of civil disturbances and who is engaged or intends to engage in any business or industry in India.'

The above definition of refugee had to face some obvious limitations in the context of the societal situation prevailing in the State just in the post-partition period. It was at once clear that the Government's definition made the "person" and not the "family" as the basis of the said definition. While with this definition it was not difficult to distinguish refugees from other inhabitants of West Bengal, but the same failed to remove the difficulty of classifying refugees on "family" basis. With such limitation in the basic description of the displaced families no useful plan and programme of rehabilitation of the persons could, as a matter of fact, effectively be launched. *The 'family' must be the unit for any systematic survey* of the displaced persons. In the official communication noted above, certain other issues need further explanation in the interest of the present study of refugee population in question.

The definition given by the Government presented two fundamental clauses for the appropriate identity of a refugee person in West Bengal. Very rightly the causes of migration were noted in clause (a) of the above definition and thereby the basic reason behind the development of a special migrant-group namely, the refugees had been explained for general guidance. But it is to be noted that :

(1) Clause (a), 'refers to persons who had "settled" in India and were either engaged or intended to engage in any business or industry in India.' Doubt was felt if this excluded persons who, even though displaced for the reasons noted "intended to settle" but had not actually "settled". As most of the refugees had not yet found permanent abode, they could, strictly speaking, be placed only in the category of persons "intending to settle". As this class was clearly not intended to be excluded, the phrase "has settled" was taken to mean "persons who had already come over to and had decided to live permanently in India".

(2) The term "displaced" was also rather unhappy. The word is believed to connote some sort of compulsion. Of course it can be said that these people were compelled by circumstances but the phrase "having migrated" would perhaps expressed the intention more clearly in this case having regard to the clause "or fear of (civil) disturbances".

(3) The term "displaced" raised another difficulty viz., whether displacement meant actual or also *constructive displace-*

ment? A resident of East Bengal had been living in West Bengal for many years for service or other business—without giving up his home in East Bengal. He may have been living with his family and only occasionally or rarely going to his ancestral home. How he feels that he cannot go back and live in Pakistan and wants to reside in India permanently. This is a case of only constructive displacement. There were quite a number of such persons. As the definition of the Government related to “persons” such persons might have been excluded but in that case some members of the same family would have fallen in the “refugee” and others in the non-refugee category.

(4) ‘Clause (b) covers a much wider field than was generally understood by the term refugee. This clause does not stipulate any *residential displacement* but only loss of industry or business or property outside India and consequent taking up or intention of taking up of any industry or business in India. Normally, this would include a West Bengal resident who was serving or carrying on any business or industry etc. in Pakistan. It would also include, for instance, a Behari or Marwari merchant who has lost his business in Pakistan but has and always had his some property etc. in India. It was felt that such a person could not normally be treated as refugee and hence, in this case, the emphasis must be deemed to be on the phrase “has lost”. Merely closing up business etc. or choosing to shift to India is not “loss” and therefore only persons who actually lost their property or business or industry for disturbances (and not also for “fear of” disturbances) was taken as coming under this category. Except for a few people from Noakhali, no such case was actually found.

(5) ‘It may also be mentioned that the definition has not excluded persons otherwise coming under two clauses, who have, from before, possessed house and or other property, business etc. in India’. (Chakravarti : 1949).

As regards the *scope of the proposed survey* which was first of its kind, amongst the displaced persons of West Bengal (1948), a list of subjects in respect of which social and economic information should be collected was prepared and the same was approved generally by the Government of India but adequate statistics on the number of scheduled caste refugee families were urged in this connection. The main items of information to be enquired into were as follows :

(a) Name of the head of the family.

- (b) Number of members in the family with relationship to head.
- (c) Age and Sex.
- (d) Marital condition.
- (e) Education.
- (f) Technical education or training, if any.
- (g) Occupation before migration of each earning member of the family.
- (h) Details of properties and assets left behind.
- (i) Whether any lands have been taken for settling in West Bengal (Indian Dominion).
- (j) Whether properties in East Bengal have been sold and if so what properties and at what price.
- (k) Means by which refugees are being maintained at present.
- (l) What occupation in order of preference the different earning members are prepared to follow.
- (m) What facilities or assistance for purposes of rehabilitation are wanted by the family.
- (n) Whether any and if so which members of the family have left behind in Pakistan.
- (o) What resources, if any, are possessed by the family at present.
- (p) Whether the family belongs to any scheduled caste.
- (q) What Muslim families of West Bengal, if any, had migrated to Pakistan.

The first scientific survey of the refugee families of West Bengal, was initiated on May 25, 1948 and the same continued upto September 9, 1948.

The survey was instituted to cover altogether 17,436 family units amongst the refugees of West Bengal according to a definite statistical design. It may be mentioned here that the largest number of completed, filled-in family schedules came from within the displaced population of the districts of 24 Parganas, Calcutta, Nadia and Burdwan. As per sub-stratum which has been explained above, sub-strata I and II taken together were to yield 5051 (29 percents of total) family schedules for recording migrational, social and economic information of the refugees concerned. These sub-strata were, of course, formed by Calcutta and Howrah cities. Of the total 17,436 family-schedules it was decided to collect 13 per cent and 44 per cent from the sub-strata of industrial suburbs of Calcutta and towns (larger and smaller) and

townships respectively of the State. From rural areas only 14 per cent of total family-schedules were earmarked to complete the enumeration of the requisite number of refugee-units under survey. These family-schedules were thoroughly analysed and studied to present a comprehensive picture of the refugees of West Bengal (1948).

It is noted especially here that the social and economic data which were collected in the said survey for the displaced persons and their family-units constitute the fundamental basis of the sociological analyses and subsequent findings of the present treatise. Apart from the general issue of social and economic condition of the refugees in the immediate post-partition period nothing specific was known about *structural characteristics* of the refugee families and eventually further sociological probe into the people in question appears imperative to understand their social behaviour towards family cohesion and living in an abnormal, catastrophic situation which was prevailing in 1947-48 throughout West Bengal, India, after the historic events of partition and mass flight of the minorities across the marches of the two new Dominions.

CHAPTER 4

PROBLEM UNDER STUDY : APPROACH, METHOD AND DATA SELECTION

The present study concerns mainly with some interesting sociological problems of the migrated families from erstwhile East Bengal. The problems revolve principally round the *structural characteristics of the displaced families*. In analysing the problems no attempt has, of course, been made to afford a bird's eye view of the general refugee problem in West Bengal, rather family conditions of the refugees with respect to their modes of migration, caste-bearings and occupational characteristics have been highlighted to present the relevant findings of interest. In this task due help has been sought from the social facts which were already gathered in the *first* scientific survey (sample) of the displaced persons of West Bengal (1948). Depending upon the quantitative data yielded by the said survey sociological probes have been extended to evaluate the *effects* and concurrently the *causes* of forced shifts of population of the minority communities from East Pakistan. Causes get the emphasis to the extent that they are social in effects and claim the immediate attention only because there had been a *permanent shift of population* to offer significant cultural and economic consequences.

The events which were the root-causes of a Hindu or any minority of formerly East Bengal becoming a refugee have been explained earlier and it has been found that the events were principally of a political nature. The refugees in question have been distinguished as a *special group* from the ordinary alien or regular migrant groups in that *they had left their territory of regular residence because of political developments there and not because of economic conditions or because of the economic attractions of another territory*. It has been already stated that 'before a man can be described as a refugee, the political events which caused him to leave, or to break with, the State to which he owed allegiance must be defined. The political events which in the country of origin led to his departure must be accompanied by persecution or the threat of persecution against himself or at least against a section of the population with which he identified himself (Vernant : 1953).

But, in case of the displaced persons under study it was a different issue. Though a *forced movement of population* results invariably in loss of citizenship to the refugees, yet in the case of East Bengal refugees there was certainly no question of granting them *new nationality*. They simply moved away from the troubled spots in East Bengal to join their co-religionists, blood relatives and inmates in West Bengal. Truly speaking, *they were no refugee, they were displaced people from one socio-political environment to another*. In the process of displacement the members of the minority groups of East Pakistan became more and more frightened, dislocated and disorganised. Most of the families became homeless and set out wandering from one place to other. 'These men, women and children lost traditional community relationships and broke family ties. These refugees were the persons who *did not leave their homes voluntarily* but were forced to do so because of threat of persecution by the Muslims there.... There was disorganisation of the family due to persecutions, death and imprisonment of many of their family members..... often they felt a sense of sudden separation and many of them were mentally disorganized' (Madan : 1966).

In the context of the above development the *image* of each refugee-migrant under study has been outlined mainly on the basis of this consideration: 'The essential quality of a refugee therefore may be said to be that he has left this country of regular residence, of which he may or may not be a national, as a result of political events in that country which rendered his continued residence impossible or intolerable, and has taken refuge in another country, or, *if already absent* from his home, is unwilling or unable to return, without danger to life or liberty, as a direct consequence of the political conditions existing there.... The term political in this description is used in a sense wide enough to include religious conditions' (Hope-Simpson : 1939).

The sociologists are concerned in general with the *consequences* of the conditions under which the minorities were forced to become a *problem group* as refugees in the receiving countries. The refugees are generally thought to represent a symbol of instability and isolation and thereby they continue to remain to be a problem group till they are able to identify and integrate themselves completely with other social groups of the receiving country. But in the case of the refugees of West Bengal they were (or are) no foreigners, rather their 'social co-

ordinates' got temporarily distorted and disorganised. They lost their natal homes and hearths, yet in general they met 'neither with hostility, nor coolness or reserve' in their new places of settlement. As a Bengali-speaking group the non-Muslim migrants from the Muslim state of East Bengal found no ostensible difficulty in meeting the *mores* of their co-religionists of West Bengal. Territorial separation was there but that was never a factor to snap the cultural and linguistic semblances between the non-Muslim refugees and Hindu non-migrants of the State. Thus, it may be understood that the refugees under study were not exclusively unstable and isolated in their new abodes within West Bengal. They were never *an unknown entity* in the receiving States of India. As each country has its own situation and problems the question of West Bengal refugees has to be merited in consonance with the objective societal situation that was prevailing in West Bengal of 1947-48.

Sociological perspective of the present study should, therefore, not be confused or equated with those which are met with in several brilliant studies made on the refugees concerned outside India (Hope-Simpson : 1939; Kulischer : 1948; Vernant : 1953; Proudfoot : 1957; Murphy : 1955). Displaced persons (refugees) of India deserve special attention of the sociologists since they created a new history of forced migration under political *cum* religious mandates. The displaced persons of West Bengal or of any State of Indian Union are not in a position to satisfy the definition of the refugees found in international laws which, on the other hand, treat a refugee as an *alien* for the State where he preferred to reside. The refugees of India were and are never considered socially or legally as aliens, rather they have been accepted as lawful citizens of the country and Indian Nationality has been accorded to them unquestionably. The fact remains clear that in consequence of communal disturbances in the areas which now constitute Pakistan they were compelled to migrate from their homeland and overnight reduced themselves to the status of 'refugee' in India.

For security, shelter and self-preservation non-Muslim inhabitants of Pakistan migrated in several States of India and under circumstances beyond their control they became eventually uprooted and displaced from their natal homes in Pakistan. Such displaced persons have been grouped under a specific *social category* of refugee for the mere purpose of general description. It should be noted clearly that the integration of such displaced

persons with the general population of India was and is in the long run inevitable and immediately after partition and migration the only trait they had in common with *true* refugees (as defined in international laws) was that they had no home, or work or that they were awaiting some sort of settlement with official and non-official help and cooperation. It is, of course, a fact that these displaced persons were *once* in the position of refugee when they were displaced from one country to another as a result of communal disturbances and solicited admission to a new country. Thus, in the present study of the migrant families whenever the term 'refugee' would occur the same shall mean unquestionably the displaced persons from East Pakistan who migrated in West Bengal immediately after the act of Partition during 1947-48.

The phenomena of mass uprootment and forced migration of the people concerned have invariably some lasting effects both on society and on the individual to produce considerable amount of 'contemporary feeling' which tends, on the other hand, to affect both 'social attitudes' and 'individual objectivity'. The displaced families and their members were no *ordinary immigrants* from East Pakistan and it is presumed that the magnitude and severity of their forced but sudden eviction from homeland of regular residences were poignant enough to produce such 'contemporary feeling' coupled with certain sharp, deep-rooted strain. This strain was, no doubt, associated with difficulties in breaking away from an *established mode of family living* and becoming transplanted in a new social environment. In such change-over the refugees of East Pakistan had, on one hand, to give up all social attachments with their home-villages and village-people and, on other hand, were compelled in majority cases to reorganise their post-migrational cultural and economic life at a *lower* social and financial level than they had been used to. Moreover, immediately after migration the displaced families had still to learn 'the general mentality of the new land'. No contact with the people of West Bengal was spontaneously and immediately easy for them; *everything had to be organised anew and built up again from the bottom*. These migrants were the unfortunate product of an abnormal catastrophic circumstances and as such they had to suffer severe impact on 'family constellation' and 'cohesive structure' of the fundamental societal units namely, families.

Social disorder through group hostility and communal pre-

judice became rampant in those riotous days and the impact of the same told heavily on the basic textures of family cohesion and community-security. The minorities (non-Muslim group) of East Pakistan had no other alternatives than to face acute disruption in the said family-cohesion and community-security. As these disruptions were precipitating days in and days out, the non-Muslims dispersed in increasing strength to join those of their own religious faith and kin-circle at a great or small distance. Kinship and emotional 'nexuses of profoundly unifying value' were exposed under unprecedented stress. Regularity and stability of family living became utterly jeopardized to throw up problems of disintegration in non-Muslim society of East Pakistan. Traditional attachment of the village people to their ancestral homes was severed painfully. Multiple external forces affected the life and living of the Hindus and other non-Muslims of erstwhile East Bengal. Upshots were : forceful eviction of hundreds and thousands of families of minority groups and mass-flight across the marches of two new countries under terrible excitement, agitation and nervous tension. In general, 'the refugees were frightened, frustrated, dislocated and confused, with no idea of the future. They had lost all they had and had been cut off from their own family members without knowledge of what had become of them' (Saksena : 1961).

Under the circumstances, it is not difficult to imagine how seriously the Hindus and other non-Muslims of East Pakistan faced inordinate disorganisations in the established set-up of their families and other interrelated kin-units. Not only they were forced to adopt new attitudes and values but also new mode of social and familial living in their post-migrational habitats. Intra- and inter-familial links had to be reorganised in consonance with the rapid changes engendered by the act of Partition and subsequent displacement from ancestral homes. Family as well as community bonds were greatly shaken and as a result, the 'social coordinates' of the displaced persons in question were threatened severely. All round adjustments became imperative in day to day functioning of each migrant family amidst a new social and economic atmosphere of West Bengal (1947-48).

Scientific probes into the *changing attitudes* among the refugees of India have already been made in other parts of the country to show that 'they did not deteriorate psychologically'. No evidence of disintegration was met with among the

refugees of Uttar Pradesh. Mental make-up of the migrants of the said State was specifically examined to understand the process of adjustment in new habitats. Changes in family structures, if any, among these migrants from West Pakistan were, of course, not examined. Rather, emphasis was given to this issue: 'Whether the breakdown of established attitudes, accepted modes of social behaviour, norms, and values have resulted in the crystallisation of healthy adjustment devices and new values, not antagonistic to healthy, peaceful and friendly living' (Saksena: 1961). Attempt was made to measure individual reaction to the local people and environment to throw light on the covert minds of the refugees concerned. Structural characteristics of the families of refugees in post-migration period were left unexamined.

Before the above survey was undertaken in U.P., an important enquiry had already been carried out among the displaced persons of Kalyan and Kalwada, Bombay (Vakil and Cabinet-maker: 1956). But the main purpose of the enquiry was 'to determine the *attitudes* of displaced persons towards the Government measures and policies' and again, to suggest means of alteration in the attitudes 'if found unfavourable to the Government interests'. Occupational-bearings of the displaced persons concerned before partition were analysed together with pattern of migration and caste-memberships. Changes in family organisation of these displaced persons were, of course, not examined. How strong was the impact of the calamity engendered by riotous situation of 1947 in West Pakistan, on the family set-up of each migrant can never be understood from the findings of the said study. Attitude-study prevailed over family-study and the net outcome was that we miss some very important sociological facts depicting the pattern of family-changes, especially under a social catastrophe. Due to the 'effect of catastrophe as a situational determinant' uprooting, suffering and disorganisation were some very common experiences of hundreds of thousands of displaced families from Pakistan, and as such structural changes in families of these uprooted migrants were bound to occur to a small or great extent. Study of these changes is a matter of topical interest to any sociologist who happens to be interested to analyse effects of forced shift of a population under catastrophic circumstances. Refugees as a group of struggling sufferers laboured hard 'to pull together fragments of a life lost' and in doing so they had to

overcome often in those months of staggering uncertainty during 1947-48 ill-effects of disintegration of family ties and kinship solidarity. What might be the structural changes in respective refugee family under the impact of such disintegration? Answer to this significant query is missing from the reports of the above two important studies.

There are other important studies on the displaced persons, particularly of West Bengal, but the same devote more on the analysis of general socio-economic characteristics of the people concerned. (State Statistical Bureau : 1951 & 1956; Basu : 1951; Sen : 1957; Sen Gupta : 1965). Examination of structural changes in displaced families has been left out to cause a significant gap in sociological knowledge about the effects of a socio-political catastrophe on the established form of family organisation of a migrant population concerned. Extraneous factors like riots, tensions, evictions, forced migrations and uncertainty of rehabilitation have had strong influences on the basic units of the uprooted societies to generate disruptions in various facets of life, if not breakdowns, in intra- and inter-familial relationships. Entire family structure became exposed to be widely shaken and dislocated during abnormal and calamitous situation.

Scientific analysis of the mode of family-changes within such catastrophic situation has hardly been attempted in India to show how the people concerned behaved on *family-level* 'to pull together fragments of a life lost' under the spell of forced uprootment and migration from homes of regular residence in Pakistan. To what extent abrupt social disorders and sufferings affect family cohesion and kinship stability and in what way disruptions in kin-links within and between families tend to modify organisational set-up of the basic social (kinship) units of the affected people remain essentially to be most interesting issues for studying the outcomes of forced eviction from any society. Displaced families from Pakistan offer, no doubt, substantial scope for such sociological study in Indian setting. In the present study an attempt has been made to examine the social issues in question on the basis of data available from the first survey (sample) of the 'refugees' of West Bengal (1947-48).

To elaborate a little the scope of present study of the displaced persons of West Bengal (1947-48) it may be noted that the objects in view are to ascertain analytically :

- (i) How the immigrants behaved immediately after parti-

- tion in effecting migration within West Bengal as well as beyond East Pakistan? In what way they acted to be held together in *individual family level* by their inner kin-bonds in ensuring cohesion (intra-familial unity)? In doing so, what structural modifications, if any, they had to accept within family units in consolidating their post-migrational social life?
- (ii) How far the influence of traditional bond of caste prevailed over the overt actions of the Hindus in their outward movements after partition beyond erstwhile East Bengal or inward mobility at West Bengal? To what extent the factor of caste caused variations, if any, in their propensity to build up anew disturbed and dislocated family-living and organisation after migration in West Bengal?
- (iii) Whether pre-migrational bonds of economic activities (occupations) had given rise to differential behaviour amongst the uprooted families with respect to their decisions for perpetual and full migration from East Pakistan and subsequent movements within West Bengal? How the displaced families originating from different occupation-classes behaved in reorganising disrupted family organisations within West Bengal after migration?

Emphasis has purposefully been laid upon the *issue of structural changes* in displaced families in question with particular reference to the accepted sociological fact that the basic unit of social organisation in human societies, past and present, is a *kinship group*—clan, a tribe, or a family. 'A kinship relationship among its members gives an organization exceptional powers over them; and for this and other reasons the clan, the tribe, or the family has usually been the primary *organizational defence against change* of any sort. In a general way it may be said that only when and where the clan, the tribe, or the family has become markedly disorganized has change of any magnitude occurred within a social system and conversely that where the basic unit has been stable and integrated the social system has remained unchanged, however marked its malfunctioning' (La Pierre : 1965). Displaced families from East Pakistan were made homeless and high individual and/or group mobility cohered with rapid changes which were taking place in the entire social and political systems of both India and Pakistan. There was

little scope in those days of trouble and mass-flight for any stability either for any individual or any family belonging to non-Muslim minority group in the newly created Muslim State. Significant changes—social, political and economic—were precipitating and obviously such changes were causing considerable stress, both individual and collective. In general, these changes were stirring up violently discontents, frustrations, dissension, and disappointments among those minorities who were subjected to 'general political, economic, and social devaluation' by the majority.

It is wellknown that *social disorganisation is a continuous process*, but its acute manifestation grows out of some critical situations. Communal tension and feud, expulsion, persecution and forced migration were some major causes to create a social crisis which, on the otherhand, was interwoven with deep-rooted disturbances and derangements in the habits, customs and life patterns of the minority Hindus and other non-Muslims. They were steadily stripped to lose most of their usual rights, possessions and social security. The displaced families were driven out of their home and hearths. They were not only displaced geographically but also socially and economically. Such 'deficits and breaches' in the social order had obvious impact on the lives of all migrated persons and their families. Net result was the formation of a significant gulf between the Muslim and non-Muslim societies in East Pakistan. The greater the social gulf, lesser was the social security and greater the personal, familial and social disorganisation among the people suffering all-round 'devaluation'. Family being the most important primary group in any society the migrants could not but suffer immediate familial disorganisation before and after Partition and its attendant circumstances. What was the nature of such disorganisation amongst the displaced families and how the same was conditioned by other social factors like caste-bonds and class (occupational) affiliations of the persons concerned? Examination of these cardinal issues constitute precisely the central theme of the present discourse.

(a) In the context of the *objectives* of the present study proper selection of the data available from the first survey of the refugees by the Indian Statistical Institute (1948) became imperative to ensure necessary sociological analyses undertaken herewith. While selecting the data it was found that though a *sample-size* of 17,436 displaced (refugee) fami-

lies was originally within the scope of the survey, ultimately data related to 16,156 family-units only could be taken into account at the time of analysis. Most of the rejections were due to incomplete recordings and extra recordings of some non-Hindu families in the schedules concerned. At the very beginning as many as 1,280 family-schedules had to be left out, as noted earlier, in the interest of the proposed examinations. Next, with respect to the first objective stated above, further scrutiny was extended to sift out those refugee-families only whose *all members were displaced directly* from formerly East Bengal to West Bengal. A careful study of the *nature of migration* of each and every member of each one of the total 16,156 family units was made and it was obtained that in as many as 11,880 families (74 per cent) the members concerned migrated due to partition *directly* from East Bengal to West Bengal. Naturally, these 11,880 family schedules had to be selected in executing appropriate sociological (and statistical) evaluations in consonance with the specific objectives in view.

With respect to the second part of the first objective namely, examination of structural modifications, if any, in the families of the displaced persons concerned the data collected by the Indian Statistical Institute from rural families of *undivided* Bengal (1946-47) had been selected to form what may be taken as the *base-line data* (Pakrasi : 1962). These data on rural families were collected from villages of both present-day West Bengal and formerly East Bengal and as such it is possible to understand the pattern of family structures which the rural people of either part of *undivided* Bengal did organize and maintain immediately before partition-time. Any departure from this pre-partitioned pattern of family structures would mean occurrence of some modifications and in the present discourse a thorough study has especially been attempted to expose the pattern of such modification, if any, in strict terms of the said base-line data. Necessary statistical tests have also been carried out to understand the significance of variations, if any, in family structures of the displaced persons.

(b) With reference to the *second objective* only scrutiny of the total 16,156 family schedules had again been made to satisfy at a time two social attributes namely, *caste-identification* and *complete migration* direct from erstwhile East Bengal. These two social attributes were emphasised together to sift out those family-units which evinced unambiguous information about the

attributes under reference. In doing so it was found that only 11,001 out of total 16,156 family-units could be selected to examine second objective in view. Eventually, as good as 5,155 refugee-units could not be employed in all analyses pertinent to the problem stated under the second objective. Selection of these 11,001 family-schedules remained necessarily independent of the selection which was made for examining the problem stated under the *first* objectives.

(c) Regarding the *third objective* under reference it should be noted that 11,880 out of 16,156 family-schedules were selected to study the problem in view. Each and every member of these 11,880 units were found to have migrated *fully and directly* from former East Bengal portion of undivided Bengal. But, on examining pre-migrational economic (occupational) activities of the principal earner or supporter of the respective displaced family it was found that 281 out of 11,880 units had no gainful economic pursuits in East Bengal before migration. Accordingly, these 281 family units were not selected for carrying out relevant sociological and statistical examinations. To answer the query raised under the third objective the data on total 11,599 family units were sifted and subjected to necessary analyses. Under the circumstances, then, the method for selection of the data pertinent to required examination of the specific problem in view had to be different and independent of the selections made for studying the *first* or *second* objective of the present study.

Methods of selection of data have been explained in short to ensure the ambit of quantitative assessment of each problem viewed above. Further explanation of the methods would be found in following pages where the detailed analytical expositions of the available data have been attempted in separate chapters in highlighting the sociological findings pertinent to each specific objective. In every case quantitative distributions related to sociological attributes (characteristics) considered here have been statistically tested to strengthen the findings which have been derived after studying such distributions. Statistical tests revolve uniformly round *chi-square* test in investigating the existence of association and moreover, the level of significance of such association between two or more non-quantitative (qualitative) characters has also been attested.

It is noted here that for the very interest of the said *chi-square* analysis description of *total association between two*

characteristics has been attempted and the aspect of *direction* of association remains, therefore, redundant here. In the present case the original universe for the specific problems at hand has already been described above and accordingly, total association between two characteristics within that entire universe may be understood better in the context of the statistical test (chi-square) involved in the study. Precisely speaking, with the help of chi-square test we have tried to answer this query: 'What levels of incidence of the categories of one characteristic are associated with the categories of another characteristic'? (Hagood & Price : 1957). That is, what is the *nature of association between non-quantitative characters investigated* in the present sociological study of the displaced persons of West Bengal (1947-48)?

Regarding several sociological *concepts* and *terms* which have been used in the treatise in the context of various classificatory descriptions of relevant attributes due explanations have, of course, been given in appropriate places. Nevertheless, it is noted here that in defining corporate groups on familial basis the question of *commensality* of the related persons living together has strictly been emphasised. Any two or more persons having definite genealogical (kinship) and/or affinal relation are considered eligible to form *familial unit*. Single individual (male or female) living alone without any other kin or affine has been treated distinctly under *non-familial unit*. The classification of different kin-groups as existed on familial level amongst the people under study, has been developed in the present study only to indicate the *broad types of grouping*. The classification employed here is, of course, neither exhaustive nor omniscient. Primary consideration was to specify simpler form of kin-grouping consisting of parents or parent with their *unmarried* children against non-simpler (extended or joint) form of kin-grouping consisting of a simpler family together with other consanguinous kins and/or their affines. It is generally held that 'patrilineal-patri-virilocal joint' family structure represents the *norm of family organisation* in Hindu/Muslim/Tribal societies of India and simple (nuclear) family structure devolves from such joint family under varied circumstances. As joint and simple families together explain the most common form of kin-grouping among the Indians, these two forms have received in the study foremost attention.

In studying structural characteristics of the family units in

question additional attention has been paid to sift out those units which presented those members who did not show patrilineal descent or did not follow the patri-virilocal norm of residence. For the purpose of the present study these members have been described as 'complex-constituents'. These kins or affines may be *female patrikins* or *matrikins* of the head of the given displaced family/non-familial unit. Female patrikins would refer to all married and/or widowed female agnates and affines related only through them to the 'head' (ego). On the otherhand, matrikins would refer to all males and females genealogically connected with some females married into the family of the 'head' concerned. Family units having complex-constituents do indicate the pattern of extension of kin-solidarity and as such the attribute of extra-familial relatives has especially been employed to understand the complementary process of integrative extension of one structure at the expense of disintegrative shrinkage of another. An important dimension of structural changes in family units becomes illumined in analysing the numerical strength of the units with such complex-constituents against those without such constituents.

Existence of more and more complex-constituents in any family units shall obviously mean (a) breakage of family cohesion in some structures and (b) extension of such cohesion in some other structures. Some kin/affine-components disintegrate from one family structure and integrate with other to cause necessary changes in the very descriptive identity of the receiving family/non-familial units concerned. To be precise, it may be cited as an example that a simple family and a simple family with patrikin/matrikin are never qualitatively as well as sociologically the same and a distinction has to be made between these two forms of kin-grouping. It is needless to stress this fact that in general, social and economic functions and responsibilities of the members of any simple family are bound to be affected as soon as articulation of any complex-constituent becomes inevitable. Kinship obligations and societal expectations have traditionally been developed such that articulation of complex-constituents with any family unit is generally never viewed as some a-social behaviour in Indian societies. Patrikins/matrikins have been granted social right to seek for necessary accommodation in the commensal group of their nearest relations and thereby kinship ties and solidarity have been ensured to a large extent. Thus, the concept of 'complex-constituent' in family-study has its own

significance, especially with respect to the Hindu social organisation. This factor serves to locate the *levels of new integration* of detached individuals from disintegrating families concerned with some more stable family structures composed by the nearest kith and kin of those detached individuals. Process of integration is, on the otherhand, socially assured on the merit of differential kinship ties, socio-economic obligations and socio-psychological reciprocities amongst the genealogically-connected persons involved in such process.

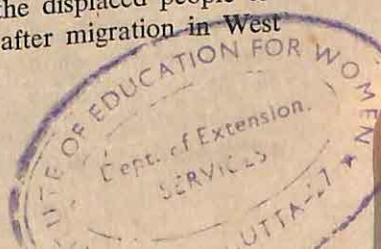
Regarding the wellknown concept of caste it may contextually be stated that no consideration has been made about *varna*-stratification of the Hindu community in describing caste-affiliation of the displaced persons in question. Without going into the question of genesis of different caste of the Hindus (Mukherjee : 1961) the general *societal hierarchy* based on relative higher or inferior position of each caste has been followed. Accordingly, the displaced family/non-familial units under study have been ranked under three categories in accordance with their accepted position in society. The top category namely *high caste group* has been identified with those who are commonly and traditionally accepted as most superior in social status. The *middle* category is formed by those from whom a Brahmin can take water. Mainly, this rank is constituted by those pure castes of Bengal which are described as "Nava-sak". The *low* category is identified with those impure castes from whom a Brahmin cannot take water (Bhattacharja : 1896). As caste represents an important dimension of integration in Hindu society the social behaviour of the immigrants under study has necessarily been examined with particular reference to their respective caste-bearing.

Incidentally, it should be noted that in terms of each and every caste and sub-caste the displaced families might be identified, but that would obviously land us to an extremely unwieldy classification. Moreover, study of individual caste-wise reactions and behaviours would not lead us to any convincing position if we attempt to analyse the available data in strict consonance with each caste-name. That would create a cumbrous and complicated situation in the present study. Naturally, three *broad caste groups*—high, middle and low—reflecting their respective *social status* have been considered to get a meaningful dimension of social behaviour of the displaced families belonging to each caste-group in question. Examination of group-wise

variation, if any, in the overt behaviour of the immigrants towards migration or family organisation after migration is our central sociological aim and accordingly, the displaced families have essentially been studied with their unambiguous affiliation to any one of the said three caste groups. *Validity and importance of such caste-classification in sociological study of the Indians* have, of course, been established already. (Mukherjee : 1961; Pakrasi : 1966).

The displaced families were placed during survey under distinct categories of occupation and also of industry. Accepting the general notion that the industry-occupation classification of any household depends on that particular economic activity which brings the largest income to the household members concerned, the families in view have been placed under some particular industry-occupation groups. Moreover, industrial affiliation indicates 'the nature of establishment, undertaking or service' with which the principal earner (supporter) of the household is associated. On the otherhand, occupational identity refers to the 'nature of work' the principal earner 'performs personally irrespective of the industry with which he is connected'. For the purpose of the present study occupational characteristics of the immigrants before migration have been studied in such manner that both industrial and occupational affiliations of the families concerned get concurrently due weightage. Neither of the two concepts has been dealt with independently, rather attempt has been made to indicate the general economic potentials of the families before migration by adopting the classification of four occupational-classes in the present study. This classification bespeaks the essential ideas which are associated with the concepts of industry and occupation.

In this case also individual avocation-identity of the persons concerned has not been given any absolute weightage. Distinct occupational groups have been identified to examine pre-migrational sectors of gainful pursuits of the uprooted people in erstwhile East Bengal. Occupational classification as employed here, is essentially meant to explore in broad outlines economic class-wise variations, if any, in social behaviour of the displaced people towards migration and family organisation after migration in West Bengal (1947-48).



CHAPTER 5

MIGRANTS AND FAMILY STRUCTURES

Family characteristics of the displaced persons have been examined here to ascertain precisely the *first* objective which runs as follows :

How the immigrants behaved immediately after partition in undertaking migration within West Bengal as well as beyond erstwhile East Bengal? In what way they acted to be held together in individual *family-level* by their inner kin-bonds in ensuring cohesion (intra-familial unity)? In doing so, what *structural modifications*, if any, they had to accept within family units in consolidating their post-migrational social life?

With this specific task at hand the available data were thoroughly sifted and examined. Out of 17436 refugee families the data related to 16156 families could ultimately be taken into account at the time of study.

Structural characteristics of those refugee families only whose all members were displaced *directly* from East Bengal to West Bengal were systematically examined. In this context social data related to structural compositions of the families of the *rural* Hindu folk of *undivided* Bengal (1946-47) have also been utilized to make certain comparative examinations. (Pakrasi : 1962).

It is noted here that 1946-47 data on rural families of the Hindus of *undivided* Bengal have been treated in the present study as baseline materials to measure the changes in family structures amongst the people concerned. 1946-47 data give the picture of the pattern of family organisations of the rural Hindus in the immediate pre-partition situations prevailing in the *whole* of Bengal, whereas 1947-48 data reveal the pattern of family organisations of the rural Hindu and other non-Muslim immigrants from that geographical part of Bengal which was assigned to the new dominion of East Pakistan after partition. Before partition present-day West Bengal and erstwhile East Bengal constituted the whole of Bengal (1946-47) and the Hindu families living in villages of both West and East Bengal presented together the over-all pattern of family organisations of pre-partitioned Hindu society of the State.

To study any changes in Hindu families of the State one has to fix some *reference-point* in terms of which changes of any order might be reasonably measured. In the present study the reference—point is determined by the rural Hindu families of undivided Bengal of 1946-47. It is precisely in consonance with this reference—point an attempt has been made to study if structural modifications were effected in the family organisations of the Hindu immigrants from former East Bengal. In this effort the mode of over-all family changes amongst the migrants in question could be ascertained in direct comparison with the family organisations found amongst the Hindus of both East and West Bengal during pre-partition years.

Family data available for the rural Hindu population of undivided Bengal (1946-47) were the only source to get the detailed compositional characteristics of the Hindu families of either West or East Bengal society of that period. Partition came immediately after the middle of 1947 to separate the Hindu families of West Bengal society from those of East Bengal society and subsequently the Hindus of East Pakistan migrated in volumes to reach different States of India including West Bengal. These migrant Hindu families superimposed themselves on the local sedentary Hindus and other inhabitants of West Bengal (1947-48). These migrant families were obviously the constituent units of the Hindu society of Eastern part of undivided Bengal and they were responsible as a group to sustain the pattern of family organisations which they were following not long ago in East Bengal of pre-partition years (1946-47).

Now, if a comparative examination of the pattern of family organisations of the Hindus of former East Bengal (1946) is made with that of the Hindus migrating from East Bengal (1947-48) to West Bengal, we are apt to reach a very promising situation in which some interesting changes (including modifications) in the said pattern might be discernible (Pakrasi : 1965). Similarly, such examination may be extended to expose the degree of structural modifications that the displaced families might accrue in direct contrast to the local sedentary Hindus of West Bengal. Thus, the comparative examinations, as mentioned above, are expected to reveal many noteworthy features that were related to family changes amongst the Hindus under examination.

Before going into the details of the said comparative examinations of family structures of the people concerned a

Careful study of the nature of migration of every member of each one of the total 16156 families was made for the very objective in view. The analysis reveals that in as many as 11880 families (74%) the members concerned migrated due to partition and communal disturbances *directly* from East Bengal to West Bengal. Place of migration-wise break-up of this 74% families shows that 52% and 17% came directly from *rural* and *urban* areas respectively of East Bengal, while in 5% cases only came those families whose members lived before migration *partly in rural and partly in urban* areas of East Bengal. *In the present context the study deals with 11880 refugees families only.*

Under the circumstances, the importance of these findings and conclusions derived from the examination of these 11880 displaced family/non-familial units is naturally to be merited on the nature of the data that could finally be utilized in making necessary analyses. In this context, the term 'rural' should essentially refer to all villages, while 'urban' would refer to all towns (smaller or bigger) and the city of both West Bengal and erstwhile East Bengal. All displaced families that claimed certain villages as their pre-migrational habitats have been treated as rural families and the rest was brought under urban category.

We are given to understand the fact that 'about 33 percent of surveyed families had one or more members still in Pakistan at the time of survey' (N. C. Chakravarti : 1949) of the refugees under study, but this estimate does not tally with the figures available for the present analysis. Nevertheless, one important social fact stands clear that *the bulk of the displaced families did come completely uprooted from East Pakistan* and thereby they had to sever all immediate cultural and economic attachments with the society in which they were living as responsible components for generations. Due to the act of partition they became over-night alien to their traditional homes and hearths built up by their forefathers and were forced to cut adrift from their regular residences and known environments and also from their many relatives, friends and acquaintances. They became 'refugees' in India where they happened to be less known or even unknown to local residents in many cases. Dislocation of innumerable families from their regular habitats in East Bengal highlighted the tragic aftermath of the division of Bengal.

Obvious impact of such dislocations was that kinship ties were subjected to tremendous stresses when the family members were fleeing desperately for some safe shelters beyond the 'land

of terror and anxiety'. Stability and security of Hindu families were highly at stake. The upshot was quick dispersions of the affected families, the members of which were forced to readjust inter-personal relations within and without each family amid a great catastrophic situation. The very foundation of each family was vehemently shaken and the 'tissued structure' of the village or town society of the Hindus and other non-Muslims began to suffer more and more unavoidable ruptures and ruins. As family represents an important dimension of integration—kinship, emotional, and economic—it becomes imperative to study the immediate effects of all social disorders and abnormalities accompanying bitter communal antagonisms before and after Partition in East Pakistan on the uprooted families in question. Such study is expected to reveal a significant social processes of both disintegration and new integration of the kin-affine components of the migrant families under examination.

In the study of these refugee families due attention has been focussed basically on kin-compositions of each displaced family and again, on the merit of differential kin-compositions the family-types have been sorted out to get the over-all pattern of family organisations of the displaced persons of West Bengal (1947-48). Different family types showing different modes of kin-combinations and kinship relations have been classified in such manner that sociological examinations of the problems in view can meaningfully be carried out. Knowledge of the pattern of family organisations as was maintained before partition and migration by the Hindus in East Bengal has already been gained (Pakrasi : 1962) and the pattern of family organisations that the displaced Hindus of erstwhile East Bengal were maintaining after migration in West Bengal could be known in following the method of classificatory analysis employed hereafter. Comparison of these two patterns of family organisations should help to understand how a group of refugee-immigrants had actually reacted on *family level* to adopt and adjust with an abnormal but changing critical situation.

A look into the modes of organisation of kinship ties by the refugee members having face to face relationships shows that a very large number among them maintained family life in both extended (joint) and non-extended structures. Uni-member units of persons living only by themselves without any kin were found to have concentrated in 8.61% cases only, the non-familial female individuals being less dominant (1.57%) among the refugees in question. It is to be noted that immediately after their

arrival in West Bengal (1947-48) the refugee-immigrants continued to maintain family-units like conjugal, elementary and extended (joint) in 91.39% cases. They formed extended (joint) units with and without 'complex'-constituents in as many as 45.60% cases (Table 5.1).

With regard to the mode of family living in *undivided* Bengal (1946-47) it has been observed that the rural Hindus organised relatively more *extended (joint) families* with and without 'complex'-elements (51%). And eventually the norm of partilocal-partilineal joint family living was still paramount among the majority of the Hindus concerned. Concentration of *elementary (simple) families* with and without 'complex'-elements was available in 35% cases only. On the other hand, it has been found that just before the act of partition Bengal villages were not lacking in those persons who lived *singly alone* by themselves without any kin-attachment. Total strength of these *non-familial single members units* was in the order of 5.06% only, female single members alone being dominant in 3% cases. (Fig.1)

DIFFERENTIAL DISTRIBUTIONS OF FAMILY STRUCTURES

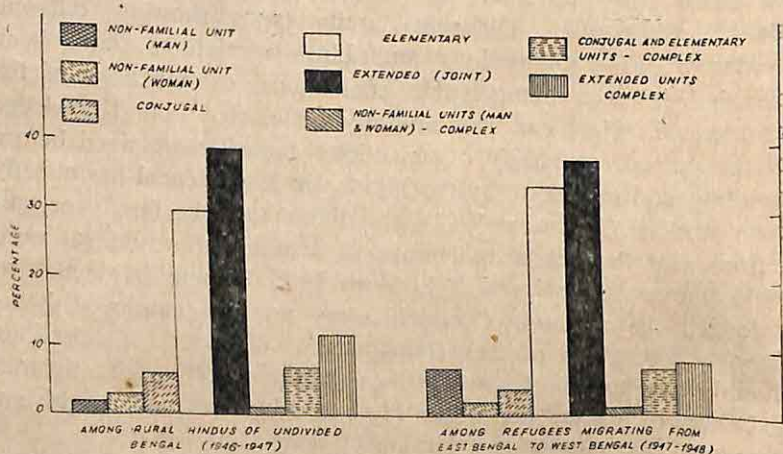


Fig. 1

As the presence of the 'complex'-constituents in a family organisation testifies to a complementary process of integrative extension of one structure at the expense of disintegrative shrinkage of another, classificatory importance of familial and non-familial units with or without such 'complex-constituents

is obvious. Analysis of the rural Hindu family organisations of *undivided* Bengal in terms of complex-constituents indicates that in 19 out of 100 cases occurred structural breakdowns—temporary or otherwise—of some families to which the 'complex'-constituents belonged originally but later they became genealogically articulated with some other kin-families. Incidentally, it may be noted here that among the refugee families in question articulation of complex-constituents was found to have occurred in only 16 out of 100 units.

Relevant findings related to the proportional occurrences of different non-familial and family structures within and between the rural Hindus of *undivided* Bengal (1946-47) and the displaced Hindus of West Bengal (1947-48) have been incorporated in Table 5.2.

These findings are of utmost sociological importance particularly in the context of the *prevailing pattern of family structures* amongst the rural Hindus in the whole of *undivided* Bengal immediately before partition. It was on this pattern we find the superimposition of the pattern sustained by the refugee-migrants in West Bengal (1947-48). To develop the former pattern the Hindus of both western and eastern parts of *undivided* Bengal contributed together, whereas the latter pattern was shown solely by the displaced Hindus under examination. At the first glance it is observed interestingly that elementary (simple) families consisting of parents/parent with *unmarried* children dominated relatively more among the refugee-migrants than the non-migrant local Hindus of *undivided* Bengal. In the opposite, extended (joint) families with and without complex-constituents existed significantly more among the rural Hindus of prepartitioned Bengal as a whole than among the migrant Hindus from former East Bengal. It indicates strongly that the displaced persons suffered unavoidable disintegrations in their joint families under the impact of calamitous dislocations from homes of regular residence in East Pakistan.

This phenomenon of structural changes is clearly exposed in the quantitative examinations of the magnitude of different family organisations among the Hindu population in question over the *two time periods* concerned. The over-all pattern of family organisations as evinced by the displaced persons of East Pakistan, does stand in clear contrast to that which was available for the Hindus of *undivided* Bengal just before partition. In short, *the displaced persons organized in West Bengal (1947-48) joint families significantly in lesser strength than non-joint families,*

units concentrated in slightly less than one-tenth cases. That the rural refugees maintained, after migration, relatively more *non-extended* family and non-familial structures than the rural Hindus of East Bengal of prepartitioned time (1946-47) exposes perhaps a significant structural development.

Immediately before partition the villages of East Bengal presented mostly bigger families in the form of joint (extended) families and this form of organisations evincing relatively more kinship integrity and stability represented, indeed, a cultural characteristic of the Bengali Hindus of that area. Naturally, the presence of joint (extended) families in more than fifty per cent cases among the Hindus in question was nothing extraordinary. To the other extreme, non-familial single members were in meagre strength amidst rural Hindu population of erstwhile East Bengal. These non-familial persons were, no doubt, the immediate resultants of some family disintegrations which had already taken place due to one and other socioeconomic reasons. Their meagre existence upheld no doubt, the general integrated orientation of the family organisations in the Hindu society concerned. Social attachments and kinship bonds seemed to exist relatively more strongly in pre-partitioned Hindu society of East Bengal and because of these bonds intra- and inter-familial integrity persisted prominently amongst the rural Hindus of eastern part of *undivided* Bengal. When 96 out of every 100 units were *familial units* amongst these Hindus there can be hardly any debate on the said presumption. But, amongst the displaced Hindus from former East Bengal villages only 91 out of every 100 units could be found as familial units in West Bengal. This single feature is potent enough to bear at once upon the nature and intensity of modifications and/or changes that the refugee-immigrants had experienced in the total make-up of their family structures.

Contextually, a separate examination of the distribution of different family structures as observed among the non-migrant rural Hindus of West Bengal (1946-47) and the refugees migrating from rural East Bengal (East Pakistan) to rural West Bengal (1947-48), helps to pinpoint another dimension of contrast in family-patterns. (Fig. 3).

We have seen just above how the Hindu migrants from erstwhile East Bengal differed from the rural Hindus of pre-partitioned East Bengal in West Bengal. Being the constituents and non-familial units in West Bengal. Being the constituents of the same culture and social life of East Bengal these Hindus

whereas in *undivided* Bengal the rural Hindus maintained joint and non-joint family organisations in almost equal strength. Again, in examining the distributions of different family and non-familial structures particularly among the Hindus of rural East Bengal (1946-47) and the refugees migrating from rural East Bengal (East Pakistan) to West Bengal (1947-48) additional interesting features are noted (Table 5.3). The present comparative study is extremely important since the population involved here constituted the components of the same Hindu society (rural) of erstwhile East Bengal (Fig. 2). Changes

DIFFERENTIAL DISTRIBUTIONS OF FAMILY STRUCTURES

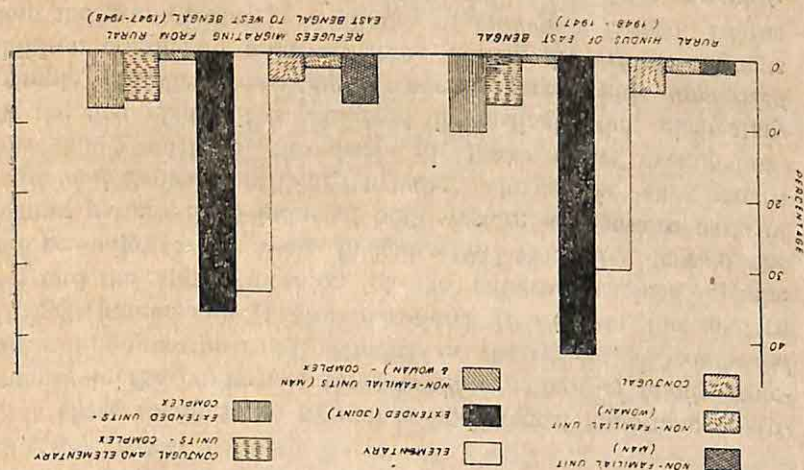


Fig. 2

in the relative concentrations of several types of family organisation examined over two adjacent time-periods in question do spell out the nature of modifications and/or changes in the *overall* pattern of family organisations of the Hindus of East Bengal. It would be found quite interestingly from the given table that while the rural Hindu-folk of East Bengal organized in pre-partition period *extended (joint) families* with and without complex-constituents in 53% cases, the refugees migrating from villages of East Bengal showed such extended (joint) families with and without complex-constituents in only 45% cases. On the other hand, *non-familial units* (males and females) concentrated in about one-twentyfifth cases among the rural Hindus of former East Bengal, but among the refugees concerned such

DIFFERENTIAL DISTRIBUTIONS OF FAMILY STRUCTURES

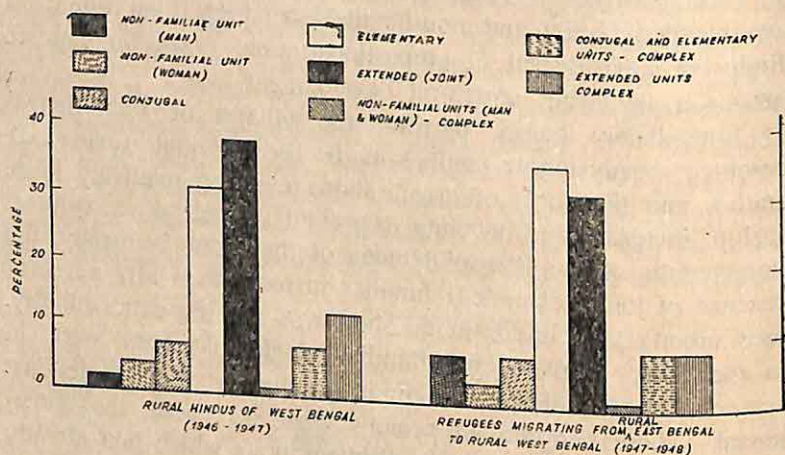


Fig. 3

failed to maintain in general the tradition of joint family amidst the cataclysm of 1947-48. After migration most of these Hindus lived individually or with elementary (simple units) family to break away from the age-old system of joint family living. In the background of these facts the proposed examination of the patterns of family structures as maintained by the rural Hindus of western portion of *undivided* Bengal (1946-47) in contrast to what was presented by the Hindu migrants from former rural East Bengal to present day rural West Bengal, would certainly be of much interest to all.

In contrast to the proportional occurrence of non-familial structures as found among the said non-migrant local Hindus (5.4%), the refugees in question showed such non-familial units in 10% cases. Male refugees who lived alone by themselves were especially maintaining a higher concentration. While the non-migrant Hindus of West Bengal organized in pre-partition times extended (joint) families with and without 'complex'-constituents in as many as 49% cases, the refugees showed such family structures in only 39% cases. Moreover, the refugees presented those extended units which only had 'complex'-constituents in relatively lesser strength (Table 5.4). It is significant to note that while the refugee-immigrants concerned maintained non-extended family and non-familial units in substantial volume (61%) in rural West Bengal after partition (1947-48), the non-migrant

Hindus of rural West Bengal (1946-47) were found to have formed such non-extended units relatively in lesser strength (51%).

Before the partition of *undivided* Bengal, the rural Hindus belonging to the eastern portion (present East Pakistan) maintained extended (joint) families significantly more than their counterparts living in the western portion (present West Bengal) of the Province. But, after migration the displaced Hindus from rural East Bengal to rural West Bengal behaved significantly differently from the local sedentary Hindus of rural West Bengal in organising kinship groups through joint families. It becomes clear at once that joint families of the East Bengal Hindus were the worst victims of the socio-political forces that were instituted in generating unprecedented minority migration from the new Muslim state in East Pakistan. *Perceptible disintegration of joint family structures was the social reality for the Hindu migrants from erstwhile East Bengal.* It is needless to emphasise that this feature was intimately interwoven with the over-all process of break-up of community integrity and economic stability in the Hindu society at large of East Pakistan.

Secondly, non-familial units constituted by single males or females only were before partition very noticeably insignificant in magnitude amongst the rural Hindu population of either East Bengal or West Bengal. This feature alone was the direct indicator of relatively stabler and more integrated kin-links and family life among the Hindus in question. 'The doctrine of blood-kinship' (Summer & Kellar: 1927) was, indeed, highly maintained by the Bengali Hindus in question. It is evident from the quantitative facts marshalled in the tables 5.3 and 5.4 that the family circle of the people in question was necessarily encompassed solidly by the 'affectional bonds' so as to minimize the existence of any single members having no kin-attachment in the society. This bond was active enough to hold the family members together within a desirable structure—simple, or joint—in ensuring kinship solidarity among the related members concerned. But, under the changing circumstances generated by the Act of Partition and subsequent forced migration the said stability and durability of Hindu society met with serious disintegrating blows, at least in East Bengal areas of *undivided* Bengal. Mode of group behaviour had to be altered continuously in adopting the changing life conditions by the minority Hindu group of East Pakistan.

Any change in group ways of behaving is in the first instance bound to influence the interactions of each member with

the others in the family. Through family 'the whole tissue of human relations, whether organized or not' (Kapadia : 1947) is immediately exposed to stress of varying intensity. The Hindu society of erstwhile East Bengal, it may be easily understood, was thus critically threatened with progressive disorganization in hitherto established patterns of inter-familial contacts, binding ties of relations and interactions. Families were dislodged from a 'social coordinate' with which the constituent members were intimately accustomed till they were forcibly evicted. 'Physical and psychic balance' of each family member was distorted in the event of forced eviction, displacement and migration. Under the circumstances beyond their control hundreds and thousands of non-Muslim families had to experience untold discontents, frustrations, dissensions which were most particularly liable to generate violent shake-ups in their kinship ties, mutual sympathy, mutual affection and mutual congeniality. Contextually, rapid and frequent disintegrations of the 'binding ties of relations' within and between the migrating non-Muslim families from East Pakistan were not unexpected and/or impossible at all.

Social experience went, of course, against such expectation. *Kinship integrity of the displaced families was maintained in one form or another in as many as 90 to 92 per cent cases.* Random break-up of the migrating non-Muslim families was not there to negate the cementing roles played concurrently by family traditions, customs, usages and sentiments. *The capacity of the family as a stable institution to persist under the most unfavourable socio-political and economic conditions had essentially been confirmed by the displaced families under study.*

In spite of many hazards and adversities the Hindu and other non-Muslim families of present East Pakistan did not succumb totally under the disintegrating forces generated by the consequences of the Act of Partition of undivided Bengal in 1947-48. The displaced persons did maintain against all odds 'physical and psychic balance' in upholding kinship obligations, duties and behaviour through individual family structure. Otherwise, the magnitude of non-familial entities (male and female) and/or simpler family units amongst the refugee-migrants in post-partition period (1947-48) would have been most alarming in the receiving Hindu society of West Bengal. Structural changes that we witness were definitely restricted to disintegration of the larger kinship bodies like joint (extended) families among the refugees and to a little extent their simple families

were also disorganized to yield some non-familial individuals or complex-constituents. In any case a *large-scale disintegrative phenomenon was notably absent amid the uprooted families surveyed in West Bengal (1947-48)*.

The developments as can be observed from the relevant statistical examinations, only signify the 'deep-rooted and all-embracing socio-psychological significance of the institution of the family for the individual and the society' in question (Prabhu : 1954). The basic unit of Hindu social organisation namely, the kinship group of families demonstrated in crisis moments exceptional powers of defense against possible disjunctive changes in structures of the families concerned. Thorough modifications in the over-all structural organisations of displaced families were definitely not in sight. Role of family as the *primary organisational defense* against any induced and complicated changes has already been sociologically established (La Piere : 1965; Burgess & Locke: 1960; Pakrasi: 1962) and the experiences that we have drawn from the present state of affairs related to the displaced families only confirms the social truth again that 'of all the organisations, large or small, which the society unfolds none transcends the family in the intensity of its sociological significance' (MacIver & Page : 1961).

In short, it may be recapitulated here that due to violent political, communal and economic upheavals in *undivided Bengal* hundreds and thousands of families belonging to non-Muslim communities were uprooted and forced out of erstwhile East Bengal. Under that abnormal situation the displaced persons experienced heavy stress within individual family setting in such manner that the very kinship and affectional bonds of the constituent members were seriously exposed to sure disorganizations, if not disintegrations. Possibilities of such structural modifications in family units under reference have been examined and certain interesting findings have been shown. Modifications or changes were there no doubt, but the intensity of the same, it has been observed, was not severe enough to bring the very structural pattern of Hindu family organizations into an utter confused and distorted state. The very system of Hindu social organisation and kinship encompassing traditionally-oriented social obligations, duties, sentiments and ties did play most significantly a unifying and integrating role to avert wanton structural fissions of the displaced family units under the most critical and catastrophic situation prevailing in Bengal immediately before and after Partition.

In the present context an attempt has also been made to examine mutual interactions of three social factors related to (1) family structures—non-familial units (males and females), non-extended family units with and without complex-constituents and extended (joint) family units with and without complex-constituents; (2) areas (rural and urban) in East Bengal (East Pakistan) from where the refugees migrated; and (3) refugees' present residence or location (village/town/city areas) in West Bengal after migration (Table 5.5 and 5.5i). It appears clearly from the features emerged from the analyses that (i) occurrences of any type of family structure among the refugees concerned were independent of the influence of their modes of migration from rural or urban areas of former East Bengal but, (ii) occurrences of any type of family structure among the refugee immigrants in question were highly significantly associated with their post-migrational locations or residences in village or town or city areas of West Bengal, (iii) in the next instance, irrespective of the over-all non-existence of association between the factors of areas of migration in East Bengal from where a family was evicted and its ultimate organisation (kinship) in present residences in West Bengal after migration, proportional differences in the occurrence of different family structures were observed only among the refugee population of the village areas (West Bengal) in accordance with their respective area of migration (East Bengal). Proportional differences were relatively more marked in the cases of non-familial units and extended families of the uprooted.

Thus, in summarising the important findings of the present study it is sociologically interesting to note *two distinct structural patterns* in the formation of families among non-migrant local Hindus of *rural* West Bengal (1946-47) and the refugees (displaced persons) migrating from *rural* East Bengal to *rural* West Bengal (1947-48) due to partition. The refugees in question sustained relatively more non-extended (simpler) structures in West Bengal whereas the non-migrant local Hindus of rural West Bengal were found to have maintained relatively more joint (extended) families with and without 'complex'-constituents in 1946-47. These facts reveal the nature of social behaviour which the refugee-immigrants exhibited immediately after their settlement in the State of West Bengal. In individual *family level* the migrants acted to maintain more simpler forms of family organisations in contrast to those of the local inhabitants of West Bengal. Before partition the Hindus of East Bengal

were conspicuous in organising more joint (extended) families in that part of *undivided* Bengal, but the members of the same community being uprooted and driven out of their homeland in 1946-47 could not uphold the said magnitude of joint family living on migrating to West Bengal. Similarly, greater magnitude of non-familial single members' units amongst the displaced persons in post-partition times was another important development. These two developments indicate most significantly the social consequences of the crisis of the hours. Truly, the migrating Hindus and other non-Muslim people of East Pakistan had to accept certain modifications in family structures and the same was more in the direction of the shrinkages of joint (extended) structures. Intra-familial kinship links got affected in various generational and collateral levels and ultimately smaller kinship groups like elementary (simple) families/conjugal units/non-familial units with some complex-constituents emerged dominantly amongst the refugee-migrants. It is quite expected that bigger kinship groups of joint (extended) families amongst the minorities of East Bengal should suffer most in the given critical time to give way to the formation of those sub-groups of kins and affines who would maintain immediate face-to-face relations in a smaller familial circles.

Affectional bonds depending upon different degrees of kinship between the constituent members of the families under stress and strain were, no doubt, the determining factor in influencing the observed modifications in the family structures of the people in question. More the primary but immediate ties of blood were closely *functional* amidst the family-members of the refugees more were the chances of undisturbed continuation of their family organisations after migration. How far this assumption was true can not, of course, be proved directly from the given data, but the trend of family organisations that we can observe amongst the displaced Hindu people in contrast to the Hindus of pre-partitioned East Bengal may be taken in favour of the said social possibility. Whatever it might be, one fact remains outstanding in this effect that the large majority of the migrants from East Pakistan was living in definite family organisations—simple or joint—after migration within West Bengal and existence of non-familial migrants was true in only one-tenth cases. The feeling of being alone and apart from other family-kins/affines was insignificant among the refugees after their forceful transplantation from their traditional society in

East Bengal to the new societal environment of West Bengal (1947-48).

Table 5.1 : Distribution of family structures among the displaced persons migrated directly from East to West Bengal, (1947-48).

Family structure	frequency	percentage
(1)	(2)	(3)
Non-familial unit (man)	836	7.04
Non-familial unit (woman)	186	1.57
Conjugal	475	4.00
Elementary	4083	34.36
Extended	4459	37.53
Non-familial (man) — complex	56	0.47
Non-familial (woman) — complex	45	0.38
Conjugal — complex	136	1.15
Elementary — complex	645	5.43
Extended — complex	959	8.07
All structures	11880	100.00

Table 5.2 : Percentage distribution of family structures among the rural Hindus of undivided Bengal and the refugee-migrants of West Bengal.

Family structure	Percentage distribution of family structures	
	Rural Hindus of undivided Bengal (1946-47)	Refugees migrating from East Bengal to West Bengal (1947-48)
(1)	(2)	(3)
Non-familial unit (man)	2.06	7.04
Non-familial unit (woman)	3.00	1.57
Conjugal	6.36	4.00
Elementary	30.03	34.36
Extended	39.08	37.53
non-familial (man)—complex	0.40	0.47

(1)	(2)	(3)
Non-familial (woman)—complex	0.85	0.38
Conjugal — complex	1.39	1.15
Elementary — complex	5.24	5.43
Extended — complex	11.59	8.07
All structures	100.00	100.00
Total number of units :	2234	11880
Obtained value of <i>chi-square</i> = 169.203 with 9 d.f; probability = less than 0.001.		

Table 5.3 : Percentage distribution of family structures among the Hindus of rural East Bengal and the refugees migrating from rural East Bengal to West Bengal.

Family structure	Percentage distribution of family structures	
	Rural Hindus of East Bengal (1946-47)	Refugees migrating from rural East Bengal to West Bengal (1947-48)
(1)	(2)	(3)
Non-familial unit (man)	2.00	7.06
Non-familial unit (woman)	2.44	1.83
Conjugal	5.33	4.34
Elementary	29.56	34.50
Extended	41.78	36.92
Non-familial (man) — complex	0.56	0.47
Non-familial (woman) — complex	0.56	0.42
Conjugal — complex	1.33	1.21
Elementary — complex	5.33	5.38
Extended — complex	11.11	7.87
All structures	100.00	100.00
Total number of units	900	9332
Obtained value of <i>chi-square</i> = 57.430 with 9 d.f.; probability = less than 0.001.		

Table 5.4 : Percentage distribution of family structures among the Hindus of rural West Bengal and the refugees migrating from rural East Bengal to rural West Bengal.

Family structure	Percentage distribution of family structure	
	Rural Hindus of West Bengal (1946-47)	Refugees migrating from rural East Bengal to rural West Bengal (1947-48)
(1)	(2)	(3)
Non-familial unit (man)	2.10	7.09
Non-familial unit (woman)	3.37	3.15
Conjugal	7.05	6.97
Elementary	30.36	35.40
Extended	37.26	30.49
Non-familial (man) — complex	0.30	0.73
Non-familial (woman) — complex	1.05	0.30
Conjugal — complex	1.42	2.42
Elementary — complex	5.17	5.33
Extended — complex	11.92	8.12
All structures	100.00	100.00
Total number of units	1334	1650
Obtained value of chi-square = 80.499 with 9 d.f.; probability = less than 0.001.		

Table 5.5: Percentage distribution of family structures among the refugees migrating from rural and urban areas of East Bengal to village/town/city areas of West Bengal, (1947-48).

Family structures of the refugees after migration.	Migrated from <i>rural</i> areas of East Bengal with present residence in West Bengal (1947-48) in			Migrated from <i>urban</i> areas of East Bengal with present residence in West Bengal (1947-48) in			total
	village areas	town areas	city areas	village areas	town areas	city areas	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Non-familial units (males & females)	10.24	7.85	10.63	4.88	5.37	11.36	8.54
Non-extended family units with and without 'complex'—constituents	51.15	45.15	45.07	47.56	48.41	42.39	47.29
Extended (joint) units with and without 'complex'—constituents	38.61	47.00	44.30	47.56	46.22	46.25	45.17
All structures	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Total number of units	(1650)	(4970)	(1702)	(164)	(1640)	(1012)	(11138)
Obtained value of <i>chi-square</i> = 554.469 with 12 d.f.; probability = less than 0.001.							

Table 5.5i : Analysis of component chi-squares in relation to the factors examined in Table (5.5).

Comparison	chi-square value	degree of freedom	probability
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Between M and L	266.1180	2	less than 0.001
Between L and F	62.2335	4	less than 0.001
Between M and F	5.9099	2	in between 0.05 and 0.10
Between M and L and F	220.2078	4	less than 0.001
Total	554.4692	12	less than 0.001

Note : M refers to areas in East Bengal (East Pakistan) from where the refugees migrated.

L refers to present residence of the refugees in West Bengal after migration.

F refers to family structures of the refugees in West Bengal.

CHAPTER 6

MIGRANTS, CASTE AND FAMILY STRUCTURE

We have already learnt the nature of migration and differential modes of family organisation after migration of the displaced persons of West Bengal. But, the importance of kinship integration can hardly be fully understood in Indian setting in terms of the societal attribute of the family alone, something more is needed from sociological point of view. The Hindu society has traditionally certain unique ingredients in its institution of caste and generally speaking, the Hindus look upon the several stratifications within their society as 'the necessary component parts of their social mechanism' (Bhattacharja : 1896). Without paying due attention to this 'ancient and deep-seated institution' no scientific assessment of the magnitude of structural changes of any order in the family organisations of either a migrant or sedentary Hindu group which is delimited by unambiguous kinship links, can really be complete. Caste-links in social, economic and even in political life of the Indians happen still to be a living issue. Hence, the attribute of caste needs due emphasis here in explaining varying social behaviours of the displaced persons towards their migration and family organisation.

Before going deep into the task envisaged above, we may think in this context of the caste system 'as a number of cultural unities invidiously juxtaposed' when the said system itself rests upon several 'cultural variates' (Cox : 1959). Precisely speaking, a caste may be judged 'as a collection of families, or groups of families bearing a common name; claiming common descent from a mythical ancestor, human or divine;.....A caste is almost invariably endogamous in the sense that a member of the large circle denoted by the common name may not marry outside that circle, but within the circle, there are usually a number of smaller circles each of which is also endogamous' (Risley : 1908). This definition bespeaks strongly about the immediate, inseparable relations that exist from long past between the Hindu kinship system and the caste system. The systems are, on the other hand, essentially complementary to a great extent. Under the circumstances, when a caste is regarded as a symbol of 'cultural homogeneity' it is not exaggerated. It has been accepted

in Indian sociology that a caste is nothing more than a collection of kin groups—agnates and affines—living in some definite habitats. Caste being a remarkable 'social distinction' pervades the Hindu society at large and no one (born in the society) can escape overt and/or covert influence of this institution of prodigious strength. This institution is fundamental to Hinduism and it provides a common 'cultural idiom' to all Hindus. Contextually, it may be reiterated that 'Kin links are a strong feature of Indian life and they go beyond the nuclear family. Indian morality is still largely made of kin and caste obligations and of the rules of religion. Kinship obligations are so strong that they tend to prevail over civic morality. Kinship loyalties tend to perpetuate class and caste difference . . . ' (Srinivas : 1962).

With this knowledge about the import of caste in the Hindu society we may proceed for the present to examine if the influence of traditional bond of caste with all its socially-approved prerogatives could prevail over the actions and behaviours of the Hindus with respect to (i) their migration after partition beyond natal villages and towns in erstwhile East Bengal, and (2) their propensity to build up *anew* disturbed and dislocated family structures after migration in West Bengal (1947-48). To spell out the problem in view the following queries have been formulated under the *second objective* of the present study :

How far the traditional influence of caste caused differentiations, if any, in social behaviour affecting outward flight of the uprooted minorities from East Pakistan or inward mobility in West Bengal after partition-led migration? To what extent the factor of caste might have instituted variations, if any, in their propensity to build up disorganised kinship coordinates through cohesive groups of the family units, in their post-migrational destination places?

It has been mentioned earlier that according to caste-affiliation the displaced families and persons in question have, for the purpose of the present study, been classed under three broad groups, namely, *high caste*, *middle caste* and *low caste*. The 'high caste' group includes those migrants who returned themselves as Brahmin, Kayastha and Vaidya. The 'middle caste' group includes those from whom the orthodox Brahmins do ordinarily take water. The 'low caste' group comprises those from whom the orthodox Brahmins shall not accept water.

The above classification of caste groups for the displaced persons has been formulated mainly on the consideration of this social fact that 'In Bengal the castes are divided into two main

groups : (1) the Brahmins and (2) the Sudras. The second class is further divided into four sub-classes, indicating their status as regards food and water; (a) the Sat-Sudra group includes such castes as the Kayastha and the Nabasakh; (b) then come the Jalacharaniya-Sudras, "being those castes, not technically belonging to the Nabasakh group, from whom Brahmins and members of the higher castes can take water"; (c) then follow the Jal abyabaharya-Sudras, castes from whose hands a Brahmin cannot take water; (d) last stand the Asprisyas-Sudras, castes whose touch is so impure as to pollute even the Ganges water' (Ghurye : 1961). In the present course of study Brahmins, Kayastha and Vaidyas have been bracketed together to form the 'high' caste group, while the Nabasakh-Hindus have been placed together with Jalacharaniya Hindus to constitute the 'middle' caste group. All Jalabyabaharya Hindus and Asprisyas have been grouped under the 'low' caste group.

It must be admitted here that we have not attempted any further classification on the basis of sub-caste-affiliation of the family concerned. Without going deep into the issue associated with the relationships between castes and sub-castes (Mayer : 1960) we have accepted the view that castes stand for a 'certain amount of cultural homogeneity' (Srinivas : 1962). Sub-castes within principal castes of unquestionable rank—higher or lower—should necessarily have corresponding cultural duties, privileges and taboos that may be appropriate and socially eligible to a principal caste concerned. Amongst the Hindus various castes form traditionally a hierarchy and their relative status-distances have also been historically oriented. Such hierarchy is also found to persist in occupation, in various items of diet, in customs, and even in general mental make-up. Naturally, the Brahmins with all their sub-castes cannot but to continue to enjoy the highest position in the Hindu caste society as a whole. Within each caste there are status-differentiations to produce sub-castes in any number but when that principal caste has by tradition and religious dictates been assigned a very high or a very low position in the very system of caste the constituent sub-castes cannot but abide by the differential 'social distinction' ordered by the general consciousness as well as consensus of the Hindus in general.

Both caste and sub-caste are inseparable elements of the Hindu society. The social relationships between different castes or sub-castes interpenetrate the very 'social matrix' of the Hindus as a whole. In fact, a caste and its constituent sub-castes, are 'interdependent social phenomena.' In general, an individual is

though mainly identified with his sub-caste, yet the image of his *principal caste* is never lost in his frequent interactions with people belonging to other sub-castes of some other *principal* castes. Castes as distinct 'segregable social groupings' loom large before every Hindu of any rank and their mutual identity is very crucially retained in strict terms of primary caste-affiliations. Both caste and its sub-castes act as a 'brotherhood' in which individual is taught to realize a *satisfactory way of life* in peace and distress. Under the circumstances, caste group-wise distinctions amongst the displaced families have been examined to see differential social behaviour, if any, among them and in doing so consideration of sub-castes-wise features has not been kept outside the purview of the present study.

For the purpose of the present study precisely two social attributes namely, (a) caste identification and (b) complete migration from East Bengal, have *concurrently* been stressed upon while examining the family data of the displaced persons. As a result, it has been found that in only 11001 out of total 16165 refugee family units the constituent members evinced unambiguous information about the attributes in question.

Eventually in the final analysis as good as 5155 refugee-units could not thereby be utilised. Under the circumstances, the importance of the findings as well as of the conclusions derived in the present context is naturally to be merited on the very nature of the data employed here. The following analysis is, thus, expected to be fruitful in highlighting the trend of caste-wise migration from East Bengal and family living in West Bengal on the part of the displaced people surveyed in 1947-48.

At the very outset the analyses of caste-wise migration from East Bengal on the part of the displaced persons reveal the following features (Fig. 4) :

1. Among the migrants except those belonging to high caste group, the individuals who were of the groups of *middle* and *low caste*, removed themselves almost in equal strength in migrating from both rural and urban areas of East Bengal. This feature was also true for those displaced families whose members lived partly in rural and partly in urban areas before migration.

2. From *rural* areas of East Bengal the displaced persons of the *high caste-group* migrated relatively in lesser strength (63%) than those belonging either to the middle caste (78%) or the low caste (79%) group.

3. From *urban* areas of East Bengal the displaced persons

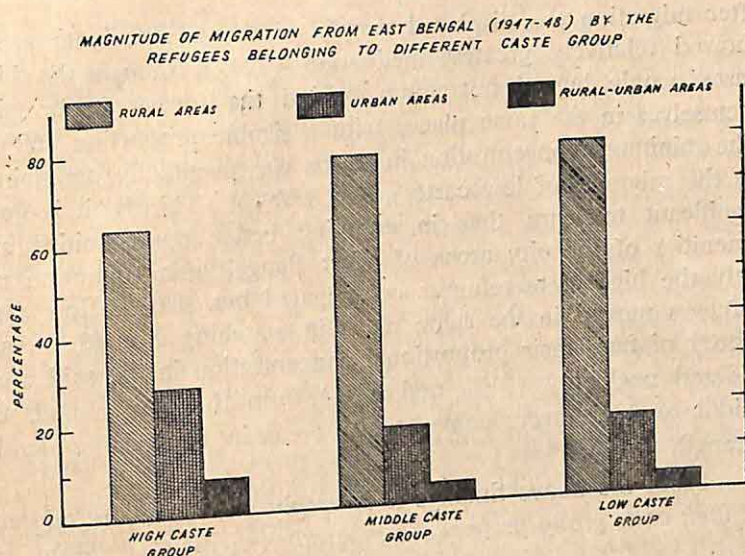


Fig. 4

of the *high caste group* came, of course, relatively in greater magnitude (28%) than those of either the middle caste or the low caste group (17% for each group).

4. Among the refugee families whose members lived partly in rural and partly in urban areas of former East Bengal before migration the *high caste* families came almost in double strength in comparison to what was shown respectively by the middle caste and the low caste people.

It appears, thus, that irrespective of their location in rural and urban areas of erstwhile East Bengal, in the face of mass migration the Hindus who belonged to higher castes behaved conspicuously differently as a group from those who belonged to caste groups inferior to that of the 'high rank'. Migrational characteristics as shown by the displaced Hindus having different caste-ranks are, indeed, sociologically interesting (Table 6.1).

Examining the terminal location of the displaced families in different areas of West Bengal (after migration) as revealed by the survey, it has been observed (Table 6.2) that in the choice of village-residences in this State the *low caste* people showed relatively the most dominant disposition (28%), whereas the *high caste* people moved to the village areas relatively in the least strength (10%). The *middle caste* people were, of course, maintaining the second best concentration in the areas concerned. Secondly, in their preference for town residences in the State

after migration the displaced people of the middle caste group showed relatively greatest inclination (72%), though the high caste people lagged not much behind the former in bringing themselves in the same places with a sizable proportion (69%). The minimum concentration in towns was eventually maintained by the migrants of low caste group (50%). Thirdly, it is quite significant to learn that in enjoying better opportunities and amenities of the city areas of West Bengal after migration not only the high caste refugees congregated but also the low caste refugees moved in the same place in matching strength. As a matter of fact, their proportional concentration in the said areas differed negligibly (21% and 22%). On the other hand, the middle caste refugees came to city areas in appreciably slender strength (9%).

From the above findings it is amply clear that the migrants of high caste group preferred comparatively least to settle in rural

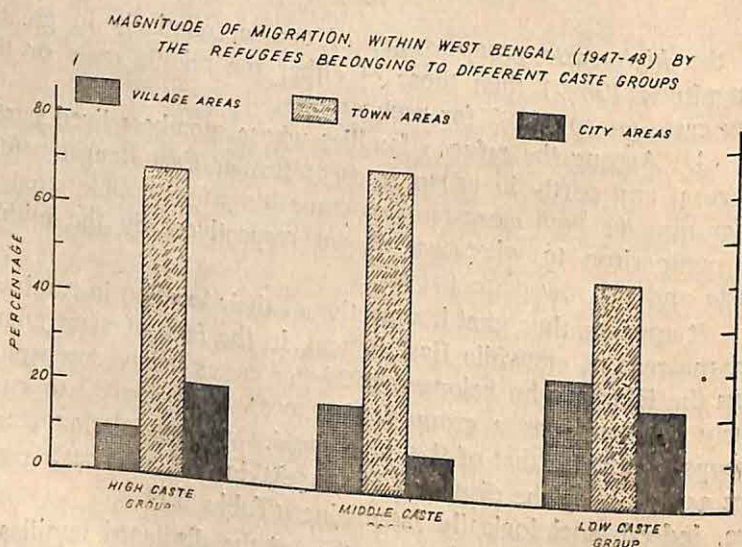


Fig. 5

environs of West Bengal (Fig. 5). On the contrary, as they were generally habituated in village life in East Bengal the low caste people continued to maintain very largely their rural living even after migration in this State. But, it is interesting to note that a good many displaced persons of the low caste group exhibited similar inclination like that of the high caste refugees to endear city environs of West Bengal in post-migration period. Refugees

showing affiliation to the middle caste group moved themselves very singularly in urban (town) environs of West Bengal.

It is further significant to learn that (1) among the displaced persons migrating to village areas of West Bengal from *rural* East Bengal it was the low caste people who formed the best concentration and the high caste people the least. Whereas among those who also came to villages of this State from *urban* East Bengal the high caste people dominated relatively over other groups in question, (2) on the other hand, of the displaced Hindus moving from *rural* East Bengal to town areas of West Bengal the middle caste people were maintaining distinct dominance over both the high and the low caste people, but among those who moved from *urban* East Bengal to town areas of the State the high caste people were again found to form relatively maximum concentration. It is notable that irrespective of their migration to town areas only of West Bengal from rural or urban East Bengal the low caste Hindus happened always to maintain relatively minimum magnitude, again, (3) in their mass movement from either *rural* or *urban* East Bengal to city areas only of West Bengal both the high and the low caste refugees migrated almost in equal strength. One fact is of immediate importance to note that in their city-bound journey after displacement from rural and urban East Bengal while the refugees of high and low caste groups exhibited analogous behaviour, the middle caste refugees struck a different course of conduct. (Table 6.3). This feature alone was significant enough to bear out the role of caste amongst the migrants in question. Though every family of each caste-group was equally exposed under catastrophic changes it seems clear that a *selective process* was in action among the migrating people to cause such differential migratory behaviours precisely in terms of their caste-affiliations.

In their places of destination within this State the displaced migrants belonging to different caste-groups in question organised kinship bonds within their own related members on family level in such manner that their caste-links appeared to be a contributing factor in affecting the pattern of their family organisations in post-migrational living.

On analysis it has particularly been found that the migrants of the high caste group formed *extended (joint) family-units* with and without complex-constituents relatively in highest measure (49%). In this regard next was the position of those who were affiliated to the middle caste group (44%). But it is noticeable that in the organisation of such joint family units the refugees of

low caste group were remarkably less conspicuous (42%) than the middle caste people. On the other hand, it is further significant to observe that in the formation of *non-extended family structures* namely, non-familial units with complex-constituents together with simpler family units with and without complex-constituents, the displaced migrants of middle and low caste groups presented themselves exactly in the same magnitude. The displaced persons of each of these two caste groups maintained such non-extended family structures in 48 out of every 100 cases. The high caste refugees had non-extended structures (besides non-familial units) in only 44% cases. Lastly, it has been found that among the migrants those who were living alone without any relations the low caste and the middle caste people stood in closer range since in about one-tenth cases they accounted individually for such non-familial units among themselves. On the other hand, the high caste migrants had such non-familial structure relatively in little lesser strength (Table 6.4).

In the above context it seems that in the formation of different family structures after migration in West Bengal the high caste refugees as a group acted distinguishably from those of the middle caste or the low caste group (Fig. 6). On the other hand,

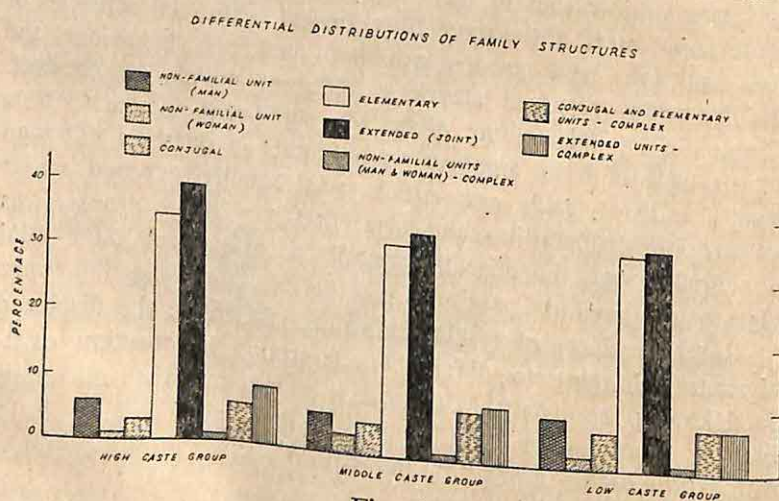


Fig. 6

with respect to the organisation of kinship ties on family level or in leading non-familial single life the middle caste and the low caste refugees appear to uphold identical tendency which was, of course, distinct from that of the high caste refugees.

In addition to what has been discussed above the following points have especially been noted here. As the bulk of the displaced families migrated from *rural areas* of former East Bengal they were studied in terms of the following three attributes taken together : (a) nature of affiliation to any caste-group concerned, (b) post-migrational location in West Bengal and (c) mode of family organisation after migration. The salient features that have been found in the analysis are given below (Table 6.5).

1. In this State the *high caste* refugees continued to lead the life of non-familial single member relatively most dominantly in villages, whereas they maintained non-extended family-units with and without complex-constituents almost in equal strength in rural and urban (including city) areas. Again, in city areas only they showed extended (joint) family units *without* any complex-constituents relatively in largest measures, while the extended family-units *with* complex-constituents occurred relatively highest among those who moved into villages (Fig. 7).

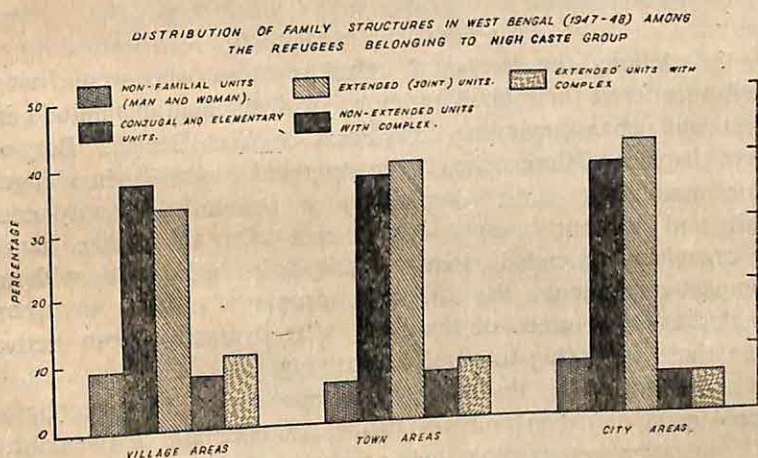


Fig. 7

2. The *middle caste* refugees presented non-familial units of single member in more or less equal concentration in city and village areas of the State, whereas they organized conjugal and elementary units (with no 'complex'-constituents) relatively more and in almost equal strength in town and village areas. Among them those who came to city areas showed also the maximum concentration of extended (joint) family units having no com-

plex-constituents, while those migrating to villages maintained, like the high caste refugees, extended family units with complex-constituents most conspicuously (Fig. 8).

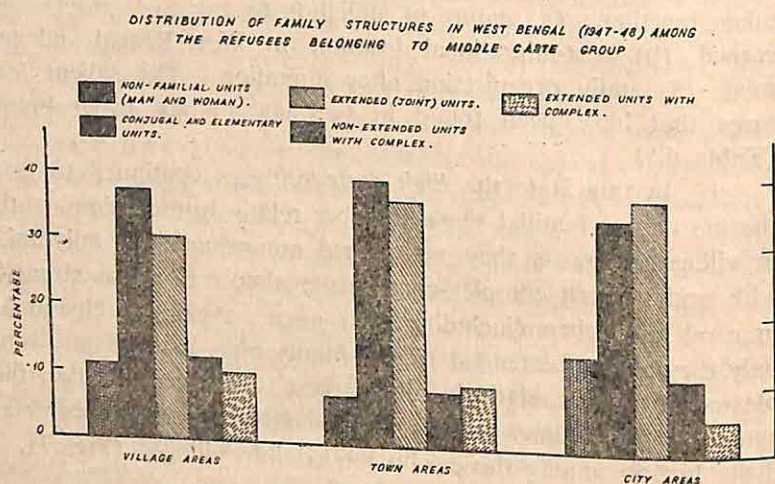


Fig. 8

3. Among the *low caste* refugees those who were living singly scattered themselves in more or less equal magnitude in rural and urban (including city) areas of West Bengal. But, of these displaced Hindus those who migrated especially in villages were maintaining most dominantly non-extended family-units with and without complex-constituents. On the other hand, in organising extended (joint) family-units with and without complex-constituents, the low caste people who went to urban (including city) areas of the State were distinctly more active than those migrating to rural areas. (Fig. 9).

In terms of all the refugees, irrespective of their premigrational *rural* or *urban habitats*, further examination of the nature of association between (i) their post-migrational location in West Bengal, (ii) their mode of family organisation after migration and (iii) their membership to the caste group concerned has been made and the relevant findings showing significant associations have been presented in Table 6.6.

In summarising the salient findings discussed above, it may be stated that in migrating from East Bengal to West Bengal the displaced persons appear to have reacted in accordance with their caste-bearings and as such (1) the high caste refugees migrated relatively mostly from urban areas of

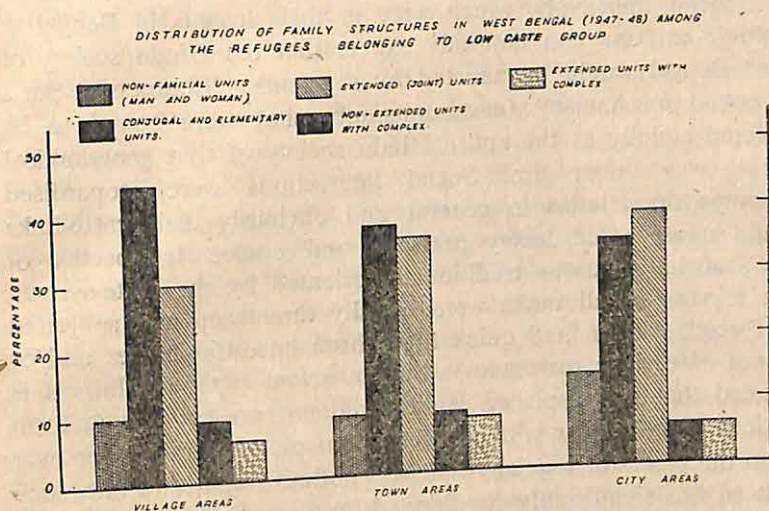


Fig. 9

East Bengal, whereas the refugees of middle and low caste groups were identically active enough to migrate mostly from rural areas of East Bengal, (2) in seeking their places of destination after migration within West Bengal the low and the middle caste refugees moved into village and town areas of this State respectively in the most dominant strength, but in city areas both the low and the high caste refugees concentrated in almost equal degree, and (3) in organising kin members on family level at their places of destination within West Bengal while the high caste people constituted extended (joint) family structures with and without complex-elements in the maximum order, the middle and the low caste people presented non-extended family-units with and without complex-constituents not only in almost equal strength but also individually more than the high caste people. On the other hand, the displaced persons (males and females) who were living alone by themselves without any kin attachment were relatively most frequent among the low caste group and least among the high caste group.

In conformity with the findings noted above some points of interest may be stressed here. Historically it is known that in erstwhile East Bengal the people and families belonging to low caste group were relatively predominant and they were followed by the persons of the middle caste group in numerical strength. The high caste people were represented relatively by smaller magnitude. Under the impact of communal disturbances

and social upheavals, which were in their heights in Bengal in 1946-48 no one can naturally expect that the Hindu society of East Bengal would be affected by segments. 'Component parts of social mechanism' (caste-units/sub-units) were bound to be affected equally as the entire Hindu society of that geographical areas was under fire. Social interactions were jeopardised amongst the Hindus in general and obviously their caste-links could never avoid heavy pressure and stress. Irrespective of one's social status as traditionally oriented by the caste-system, the Hindus of all ranks were equally threatened and subjected to forced eviction and quick flight from ancestral homes and/or places of regular residences. But, in actual state of affairs it is noticed that the displaced Hindus did not present any uniform pattern of behaviour with respect to complete migration for ever from the places of regular residences and as a matter of fact, such pattern was significantly conditioned by their caste-bonds together with many other factors. Their actions appeared to be neither individual or random phenomena. A *process of selection* induced jointly by caste-dictates, economic motivations and other societal exigencies seemed to be in operation among the Hindus belonging either to rural or urban localities of former East Bengal.

The above developments lend support substantially to the possibility that of many societal factors the castes as 'powerful norm' functioned in such manner that social variations tended to gravitate in a particular direction amongst the Hindu migrants suffering an abnormal situation. It appears that inclinations and thought-processes of each migrating Hindu had, as it can be surmised from the findings analysed here, to be accommodated under his/her caste-*dharma* or the way of life. Group-interests must have prevailed most among the Hindu migrants to ensure caste-integrity and common plan of actions under the given unusual socio-political and economic conditions in East Bengal (1946-48). As a matter of fact, the displaced people belonging to different castes (and sub-castes) did not behave erratically and individualistically, rather they acted group-wise, presumably in consonance with the feelings and consciences expressed by their respective local caste/sub-caste circle.

It is needless to emphasise that the core of stability in the Hindu society has for long been secured by the caste system which 'orders the society essentially according to the functions of different groups, and which order is traditional, sacred, and therefore presumptively changeless' (Cox : 1959) and as such the Hindus of East Bengal could not but to adhere to this

'order' in the best interest of their group-viability. The present analysis has made it clear that the factor of caste did cause noteworthy discrimination in the overt actions of the displaced persons in question towards not only migration but also family organisation after migration. These actions appear, as noted earlier, to be neither individual nor random phenomena. In fact, the presence of some sort of a distinct *pattern* of behaviour amongst the migrants who were differentiated by their caste-affiliations has been found dominant. Such pattern can be fully appreciated if we give due weightage to the said traditional and sacred 'order' of the caste-system of the Hindus. To assess this important social issue one should not minimise the reality that in the Hindu society at large 'each man is a member of some caste and each caste is an *essential organ* of the whole discharging a function at once peculiar to itself and necessary to the full life of the caste system. Only *through his participation in this group life can the individual attain his own ends* and conversely, only with the aid of every individual and every group can the caste system afford the appropriate setting for the fullest life of its individual members. All men exist in and for each other and are bound to each other by '*an intricate network of mutual obligations*' (Wiser, W. M. quoted in Cox : 1959).

It should be noted here that it is with this 'intricate network of mutual obligations' the constituent members of each caste/sub-caste group have had, no doubt, mutual sympathy and congeniality in achieving some sort of a definite pattern of behaviour appropriate to the prevailing traditions and codes of conduct. In the face of emergency-actions which the Hindus of erstwhile East Bengal had to take just prior and after partition-time absolute need for mutual understanding and exchange of thought became imperative to safeguard immediate interests—familial, economic and social—against communal persecutions and financial deprivations. Kinship and caste organisations that were developed and reared by the Hindus in East Pakistan acted most likely as the cementing *social media* through which the uprooted families could express and entertain heightened emotion of interdependence under unprecedented misery, hardship and vicissitude. Caste-wise differentiations in overt behaviours pertaining to differential modes of migration and family organisation as have been found in the present examination, were most reasonably oriented under the direct impact of the said 'heightened emotion of interdependence' by the migrant families under reference.

'The security which the caste gives its adult members is of the same kind of fearful *indispensability* as that which the family provides for its young children. The competence of the caste does not end with the exercise of *organisational and juridical functions*, it is also ultimately concerned with the domestic life of the individual' (Cox : 1959). With this sociological understanding of the role of caste in the Hindu society should any one deny the utter importance of the factor of caste/sub-caste in the dislocated lives of the migrating Hindus of formerly East Bengal ? Again, a social fact can never be minimised that within each *caste-circle* the constituent member concerned happens to be a person who is expected to participate consciously in his 'in-group' with some common expectations for reciprocal services and privileges and eventually the destiny of that individual is bound to be the same to that of any other members of the given caste-circle. On the other hand, it has been found in the Hindu society that the factor of caste adds always greatly to general contentment and 'caste people consider it a binding duty not only to provide for kinsmen and friends, but for all brethren in distress'. Should the Hindus of uprooted families from former East Bengal be expected to mark an exception extraordinarily in digressing from the above standard of caste conduct (set by tradition)? Rather, sociological experiences are not lacking to emphasise that when social changes of notable magnitude do occur to affect the people living in a given area of communication the caste organization as a whole or part of it dominates most judiciously to defend its constituent members against any possible social devaluations or derangements. This 'cultural phenomenon' was, we may assume, not missing amongst the evicted Hindus of East Pakistan during 1947-48.

As castes are 'interlaced by reciprocal ties of duties and obligations' (Bose : 1960) they help enormously to retain a sense of identity as well as linkage between several sub-castes which may constitute a primary caste. Sub-castes are nothing but some societal segments encompassing several cognate groups, the constituent members of which consider his caste always as 'the thing of all things' in daily living. Kinship extension and familial unity are strongly determined and ordered by caste-affiliations in Indian society and as such caste remains basically a prime factor in appraising levels of integration among the Hindus. A satisfactory way of life for any Hindu is practically impossible outside his caste-circle and his rights and immunities

against any hazards are squarely secured for him by his caste, 'while outside caste he is *destitute of social influence* and disconsolate' (Cox: 1959). The displaced Hindus from former East Bengal became to a large extent destitute no doubt, but they were certainly never 'destitute of social influence'. Their 'social coordinates' were distorted, yet they did not reduce themselves completely to the position of a disorganised forlorn group. Social disorders were heavy, yet most of the members of the displaced families were not fully disarticulated to have the feeling of being alone and/or apart from others. Family life and living of the Hindu migrants met the most depressing situation in post-partition years, but the process of interactions within the displaced families as a group was perhaps not defunct to uphold necessary kinship integrity and social links in their post-migrational habitats within West Bengal. Group-ways of behaving had, of course, to be altered by the migrants in order to get continuously adapted and adjusted to the changing, if not challenging, life conditions before and after migration. Such course of actions caused some obvious changes in social behaviour of the displaced persons and how the actions of the migrants could be free from the complex influences of the ubiquitous institution of caste and its 'organizational and juridical functions'?

The present study exposes the social reality that the refugee-migrants in question did behave in conformity with the traditional dictates of caste conscience in taking decisions for complete migration from the new Muslim State of Pakistan as well as for maintaining family organisations after migration in a new social environment of West Bengal. We may conclude reasonably that caste did play a unifying force amongst the dispersing, uprooted Hindu families and caste-affiliation of each migrant family was pivotal in the overt actions of its constituent members. It would not be out of context to expect that amongst the Hindus under distress the factors of common religious attachments, consciousness of kind and security derived from belonging to a group of sufferers, played a dominant part. Caste and kinship—two vital cultural systems of the Hindus—are strongly expected to have helped enormously the displaced families in maintaining due cohesion and emotional nexus among themselves against utter disorder and disintegration. They were under severe strains, no doubt, in the very process of change-over from their old modes of life and social interactions to some new ways of living but for that the displaced persons did not constitute delinquent group by themselves. Caste and kin-

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(6)
city areas	20.59	8.91	21.81	19.12
total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(number of units)	(6032)	(1470)	(3499)	(11001)

Value of chi-square = 666.445 with 4 d.f.; probability = less than .001.

Table 6.3 : Percentage distribution of the refugee families of the high/middle/low caste group migrating from rural and urban areas of East Bengal to village/town/city areas of West Bengal, 1947-48.

	rural areas of East Bengal with present residence in West Bengal (1947-48) in	village town city areas	(6)	(7)	(8)
caste affiliation of families	urban areas of East Bengal with present residence in West Bengal (1947-48) in	village town city areas			
	total (num-ber of units)				

Value of chi-square = 1462.381 with 12 d.f., probability = less than 0.001.

links must have prevailed over their civic morality to resist any harmful psychological derangements. The displaced families were not shattered fully to mark extreme sign of disintegrations rather, 'kindred of cooperation' and 'kindred of recognition' (Mayer : 1960) should have functioned effectively through caste-consciousness and solidarity in sustaining kinship integrity among the uprooted group of Hindu families from erstwhile East Pakistan in the post-partition time during 1947-48.

Table 6.1 : Percentage distribution of the refugee families of high/middle/low caste group over different areas in East Bengal from where they migrated, 1947-48.

area in East Bengal					caste affiliation of the refugees	
from where migrated					low	total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)		
rural areas	63.38	78.38	78.65	70.24		
urban areas	28.33	17.27	17.15	23.30		
rural-urban areas	8.29	4.35	4.20	6.46		
total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00		
no. of units					(3499)	(11001)
Value of chi-square = 303.715 with 4 d.f.					probability = less than .001.	

Table 6.2 : Percentage distribution of the refugee families of high/middle/low caste group over different areas in West Bengal to where they migrated, 1947-48.

area in West Bengal					caste affiliation of the refugees	
to where migrated					low	total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)		
high caste	10.29	19.46	28.29	17.24		
middle caste	69.12	71.63	49.90	63.34		
low caste						
village areas						
town areas						

Table 6.4: Percentage distribution of family structures among the refugees belonging to high/middle/low caste group in West Bengal. 1947-48.

Family structures	caste affiliation of the refugees			total
	high caste	middle caste	low caste	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Non-familial unit (man)	6.02	5.99	8.37	6.76
Non-familial unit (woman)	1.04	2.52	1.97	1.54
Conjugal	2.64	5.44	5.97	4.07
Elementary (simple)	35.08	32.86	33.58	34.31
Extended (joint)	39.74	34.83	35.07	37.60
Non-familial (man)—complex	0.25	0.68	0.74	0.46
Non-familial (woman)—complex	0.35	0.54	0.40	0.39
Conjugal — complex	0.81	1.70	1.63	1.19
Elementary — complex	5.32	6.39	5.35	5.47
Extended — complex	8.75	9.05	6.92	8.21
All structures	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(number of units)	(6032)	(1470)	(3499)	(11001)

Value of chi-square = 174.134 with 18 d.f.;
probability = less than 0.001.

Table 6.5 : Percentage distribution of family structures among the high/middle/low caste refugees migrating from only rural East Bengal to village/town/city areas of West Bengal, 1947-48.

Family structures	Refugees migrating from rural East Bengal to West Bengal in			total
	villages	towns	cities	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
High Caste Refugees				
Non-familial units	10.51	6.94	7.29	7.42
Conjugal and elementary units	38.26	37.44	38.24	37.69
Extended (joint) units	32.44	40.22	43.05	39.85

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Non-extended family and non-familial units with complex	7.61	6.82	6.47	6.84
Extended units with complex	11.18	8.58	4.95	8.20
All structures	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(number of units)	(447)	(2668)	(727)	(3842)
<i>Value of chi-square = 3.126 with 8 d.f.;</i>				
<i>probability = less than 0.001</i>				

Middle Caste Refugees

Non-familial units	12.25	7.59	12.79	9.00
Conjugal and elementary units	37.55	39.04	30.23	38.06
Extended (joint) units	28.86	35.74	43.02	34.77
Non-extended family and non-familial units with complex	10.67	8.69	10.47	9.26
Extended units with complex	10.67	8.94	3.49	8.91
All structures	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(number of units)	(253)	(817)	(86)	(1156)
<i>Value of chi-square = 16.905 with 8 d.f.;</i>				
<i>probability lies between 0.02 and 0.05.</i>				

Low Caste Refugees

Non-familial units	9.64	9.48	10.83	9.79
Conjugal and elementary units	45.55	37.72	37.58	40.38
Extended (joint) units	29.87	36.52	38.64	34.60
Non-Extended family and non-familial units with complex	8.90	8.14	6.16	8.06
Extended units with complex	6.04	8.14	6.79	7.19
All structures	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(number of units)	(944)	(1339)	(471)	(2754)
<i>Value of chi-square = 26.410 with 8 d.f.;</i>				
<i>probability = less than 0.001.</i>				

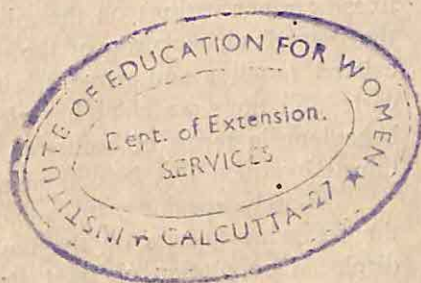
Table 6.6 : Percentage distribution of family structures among the high/middle/low caste refugees migrating from East Bengal to village/town/city areas of West Bengal, 1947-48.

Family structure	Refugees migrating from E. Bengal to W. Bengal in			total
	village areas	town areas	city areas	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
High Caste Refugees				
Non-familial units	9.05	6.48	7.81	7.06
Conjugal and elementary units	37.84	37.56	38.61	37.72
Extended (joint) units	34.30	39.84	42.11	39.74
Non-extended family and non-familial units with complex	7.57	6.76	6.20	6.73
Extended units with complex	10.79	9.36	5.72	8.75
All structures	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(number of units)	(621)	(4169)	(1242)	(6032)
<i>Value of chi-square = 37.341 with 8 d.f.; probability = less than 0.001.</i>				

Middle Caste Refugees				
Non-familial units	11.19	7.12	13.74	8.50
Conjugal and elementary units	37.41	39.13	33.59	38.30
Extended (joint) units	29.72	35.99	36.64	34.83
Non-extended familial and non-familial units with complex	11.54	8.45	11.45	9.32
Extended units with complex	10.14	9.31	4.85	9.05
All structures	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(number of units)	(286)	(1053)	(131)	(1470)
<i>Value of chi-square = 18.77 with 8 d.f.; probability lies between 0.02 and 0.01.</i>				

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Low Caste Refugees				
Non-familial units	9.90	9.22	13.50	10.34
Conjugal and elementary units	44.85	38.37	35.39	39.55
Extended (joint) units	30.20	36.14	38.92	35.07
Non-extended familial and non-familial units with complex	8.99	8.48	6.16	8.12
Extended units with complex	6.06	7.79	6.03	6.92
All structures	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(number of units)	(990)	(1746)	(763)	(3499)

Value of chi-square = 39.784 with 8 d.f.;
probability = less than 0.001.



CHAPTER 7

MIGRANTS, OCCUPATION CLASS AND FAMILY STRUCTURE

Under the impact of communal persecutions and sprouting insecurities the Hindu and other non-Muslim families and persons concerned had to break away permanently not only from their ancestral and/or regular homes and hearts but also with their essential dependent-links with various agricultural and non-agricultural sources of gainful livelihoods in erstwhile East Bengal. Economic security was alarmingly thrown into despair by various anti-Hindu measures and communal rivalry. Thousands and hundreds of families belonging to non-Muslim minority groups were denied uninterrupted continuance of economic activities in any sector of occupations. This economic insecurity coupled with general socio-political chaos was, in fact, a dominant cause for wanton migration of people belonging to the non-Muslim minority groups. Such abrupt but painful severance with immediate source of daily breads should naturally have its distressing repercussions on the migrating families and persons. In the immediate backdrop of the nature of social behaviour of the evicted families and persons with particular reference to their caste-affiliations we shall henceforth try to examine their social behaviour in terms of economic status and attachment, as maintained by them just before migration in East Bengal.

Precisely speaking, an attempt has been made to examine the following queries on the basis of the data available on the displaced population of West Bengal (1947-48) in fulfilling the *third objective* of the present study :

Whether pre-migrational bonds of economic activities (occupations and/or jobs) had given rise to differential behaviour amongst the uprooted families and persons with respect to their crucial decisions for perpetual and full migration from formerly East Bengal (now East Pakistan) and subsequent movements within West Bengal in Indian Union? How the displaced families originating from different occupation-classes behaved in reorganising disrupted kinship structures within West Bengal after migration?

It is reasonably presumed that under the given disturbed circumstances the primary economic ties of the principal family-

supporters who were, prior migration, engaged in several gainful occupational activities for earning subsistence for themselves and their dependents, should have discriminating influence on family-decisions pertaining to permanent migration beyond homeland. That occupation as a social trait wields perceptibly significant influence on every gainfully employed person and their dependents of any society is an established knowledge in sociology and accordingly, *social-psychological functions of occupations* have already been stressed duly by many social scientists. (Caplow : 1954; Friedman & Havighurst : 1954; Glass : 1954; Bendix & Lipset : 1954; and Roe : 1956). In Hindu caste-society occupations have long since been valued as a vital medium of integration in encompassing relevant socio-economic 'forces which act on members to remain in the group'. Under the circumstances, the *role of occupations* needs due cognizance in the background of the total behavioural pattern evinced by the displaced persons of West Bengal (1947-48).

Among the Hindus family solidarity is not governed alone by caste-consciousness and regulation, occupational relationships pose also to be a very important 'key to organised social life' to uphold integration and group-existence. For centuries together, it is evident from social history of the people, castes and occupation classes have *jointly* functioned to secure integrated cultural life of the Hindus in general. It has been stated that 'the homogeneity of the group is said to have been one of the important reasons for the group's cohesiveness' (Ogburn & Nimkoff : 1958) and amongst the Hindus this 'homogeneity' has been sustained through caste-bonds and occupation class-links nourishing common and/or supplementary interests (social, economic, and psychological) in life-activities. Though 'the social structure is subject to incessant change, growing, decaying, finding renewal, accommodating itself to extremely variant conditions and suffering vast modifications in the course of time' (MacIver & Page : 1961), the Hindu caste and occupation-class systems continue to function from long before in such a manner that social balance and group-cohesiveness have never gone out of gear. Social pressure towards conformity in terms of prevailing group-norms (or standards) also continues to bring necessary *order* within and between the interacting units of all systems of the Hindu society. Under the circumstances, there can be no debate about the fact that the displaced Hindus of erstwhile East Bengal being constituents of the wider Hindu society, enjoyed no exception to experience the same *basic* social phenomenon, as outlined just above. In

every society numerous processes of change do occur simultaneously to keep the interacting units of all social systems in *dynamic equilibrium*. This sociological fact is universal, but under a *crisis situation* how these change-processes react? Further question remains paramount in this effect : Are reactions and adjustments (social behaviour) of a crisis-ridden people to certain sudden and abnormal changes similar to those which are experienced by the people normally subject to incessant but inevitable changes under interactive developments of the society as a whole? Study of the displaced migrants as a group (as undertaken here) might considerably help to get some satisfactory answers to the above query.

With this *perspective* in mind we have attempted to study the impact of the major occupation-classes having specific group-norm (standard) of conduct on the refugee-migrants in a disastrous situation. Individual job-wise analysis has in this respect not been ventured, since such an attempt would eventually lead us to an extremely unwieldy task to reveal any findings meaningful to group behaviour of the displaced families in question. It should be noted here that the attribute of occupation has been employed in the study as an 'initial index of social status' (Glass : 1954) and the fact has also been recognised that 'social status in the community usually depends more upon the occupation than upon any other single factor' (Roe : 1956).

Contextually, we note that occupation of any individual is 'more than just a means of livelihood or an outlet for his creative energy'. Truly speaking, social position, economic welfare, cultural outlook, and even daily habits and behaviours of any gainfully employed person are all determined in general by the kind of occupation he holds and the form of professional associations he interacts with. Naturally, the migrant families in question need to be examined with special reference to their pre-migrational attachments with various occupations of allied nature. It is believed that such examination would help expose differential social behaviour of the displaced persons towards migration and family organisation after migration. Moreover, on the merit of the sociological hypothesis that 'it is by consensus and by sharing of attitudes that occupational groups on the large scale became sociologically meaningful' (Caplow : 1954) we have proceeded to examine the migrant-families in terms of certain broad occupation-classes employed for the present study.

Accordingly, the displaced family units and individuals living alone have first of all been sifted to place under *four* broad occupational groups (classes) in strict accordance with the pre-migrational avocation of the principal supporter (or earner) of the respective family and single member unit. Occupations (jobs) which have been included in each class are of allied nature and remain distinct from those placed under any one of other three classes in indicating the primary but varying means of living for the displaced families and persons under reference. Occupations of allied nature give rise, thus, to the following four classes (groups): (i) *Agriculture* and kindred avocations, (ii) *Trade and Commerce* and allied activities, (iii) *Service* and allied jobs, and (iv) Others including callings that are not included in any one of the first three groups. These groups conform, in fact, to the major sectors of gainful pursuits (Industry) of the country. Such classificatory arrangement has been employed essentially to explore, as pointed out earlier, in broad outlines occupation group-wise variations, if any, in social behaviours of the displaced persons. Incidentally, it is to be noted that 281 out of 11,880 family-units examined in the present context showed no pre-migrational attachments to any gainful occupations at former East Bengal and as such these units have been left out of consideration. Before proceeding to discuss the importance of the findings as well as of the conclusions derived from the same it is stated that the present attempt is restricted to the consideration of only 11,599 (72%) of the total 16,156 displaced family and single member units surveyed in West Bengal (1947-48). Nevertheless, it is expected that the discussion made hereafter would be of some use in highlighting the trend of occupation class-wise migration and family formation among the refugees of West Bengal.

From the standpoint of migration from erstwhile East Bengal the displaced persons belonging to different occupation-classes in question presented certain notable features which run as follows (Table 7.1): (a) The displaced households which were dependent on *agriculture* and the related work for subsistence came, as it should be, mostly but *not fully* from rural areas of East Bengal (35%). It is interesting that in as many as 16% cases, the constituent-members resided exclusively in urban areas but earned their livelihood from some agricultural sources. Again, it is found that in a considerable number of cases (23%) the migrant families enjoyed subsistence-benefits from agricultural sources, but their constituent members did not reside *exclusively*

either in urban or in rural areas; but before migration they remained on family level partly in villages and partly in urban centres of East Bengal. It is most significant that *less than one-third of the total migrant families and persons surveyed were connected prior to migration only with agriculture and allied avocations*. This means that agriculture-bound families and persons did not form the dominant group among the displaced population in question at the time of the first survey (1947-48); (b) secondly, it is observed that the migrant families which depended on livelihood drawn out of *trade and commerce* and allied activities in East Bengal came in equal strength (36%) from rural and urban areas. In relatively lesser strength (24%) came those families whose members lived scattered partly in rural and partly in urban areas before migration but depended on economic sources of trade and commerce. Though only a little more than one-third of the total displaced persons depended on trade and commerce in East Bengal, yet quite significantly, such families and persons constituted the *single dominant group* among the displaced population of West Bengal in 1947-48; (c) thirdly, the principal earners who were engaged in *service* type of jobs (bureaucratic, clerical and domestic professions) in East Bengal were associated most remarkably with those families whose members resided before migration partly in rural and partly in urban areas (48%) of East Bengal, whereas the families which migrated with all members from *only rural areas* depended least on the sources of service type of occupations (18%) in East Bengal. The data reveal clearly that the earners of the refugee families belonging to the bureaucratic-cum-clerical professions resided very largely in urban areas, while their family dependants stayed in rural areas. At the time of migration, the said earners of urban areas together with their rural dependants came away in sizable numbers. A singular concentration (proportional) of the families concerned is, thus, met with under the category of 'rural-urban areas' of migration. On the other hand, the number of displaced families and single members depending on services but living only in urban areas of East Bengal were, of course, not insignificant among the given refugee population of the State; (d) lastly, the migrants depending on miscellaneous types of occupation other than those related to agriculture, trade and commerce or bureaucratic and professional service were most conspicuously the members of those families which came very

dominantly from rural areas (12%) of erstwhile East Bengal (Fig. 10).

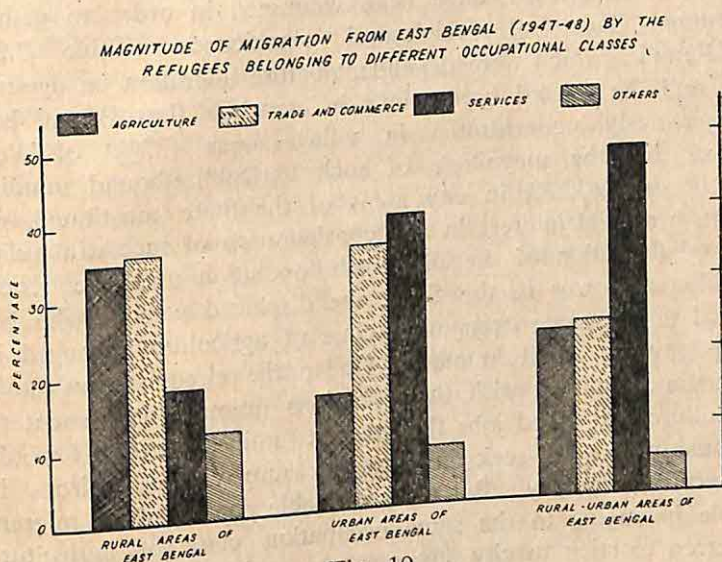


Fig. 10

On further analysis it is observed that the displaced families which migrated exclusively from *rural areas* of East Bengal were in the majority associated with trade and commerce rather than agriculture, whereas those moving out of *urban areas* were dependent mostly on bureaucratic and other type of services than on trade and commerce. On the other hand, it has been found that the migrant families whose members resided prior to migration partly in rural and partly in urban areas of East Bengal were dependent exclusively on economic source of bureaucratic and other type of services of the family earners concerned.

In general, it is important that only 30 out of every 100 displaced family and non-familial units were before migration actually agriculture-bound units in Bengal. In that *initial phase* of mass migration, non-Muslim families and persons depending particularly upon trade and commerce became the major victims, and they were next followed by those who were in bureaucratic and other type of services in East Bengal. It is significant that *the bulk (60%) of the displaced persons who drifted along with the first wave of mass migration to West Bengal in 1947-48 were non-agricultural people.*

In contrast to their differential behaviour in migration from East Bengal the nature of movements of the displaced persons within West Bengal have been examined in order to gather additional facts of sociological significance (Table 7.2).

(1) Families which were dependent before migration on *agriculture* and the related occupations in erstwhile East Bengal had conspicuously concentrated in village areas (37%) of West Bengal, but the magnitude of such agriculture-bound families and persons (32%) in city areas of the State constituted, no doubt, a special interest in any consideration of successful relief and rehabilitation of the displaced population under reference. In different towns of the State, the displaced persons who belonged to the same occupation class of agriculture thronged in comparatively small number. Under the circumstances, it is understandable that with their previous intimate attachment to agriculture and allied jobs the migrant families concerned would reasonably like to seek in large measure village environs in the receiving country. But when a sizable portion of the migrant people belonging to the same occupation class of agriculture preferred to stick to city environs, the social situation does become greatly infested with many pressing problems.

(2) It is of interest to learn that the displaced family and single member units which were primarily before migration linked with *trade and commerce* came largely to reside in city areas of West Bengal. Their degree of concentration thinned out from towns to villages in West Bengal. The displaced families and persons earning subsistence from trade and commerce preferred to settle down significantly in the non-rural areas of the State of West Bengal (1947-48). It was no wonder that the urban centres being the principal seats of various big or petty trade and business activities of West Bengal should necessarily at that period attract such high influx of the refugees. Actually, 72 out of every 100 refugee families of this occupation class were found to have concentrated in towns and cities of the State at the time of survey.

(3) Migrant families and single member units depending before migration on bureaucratic, clerical and other type of *services* in East Bengal were found to have concentrated in maximum strength in towns (29%); their least concentration being noticed in the villages of West Bengal. That the majority of the families of this occupation class of services selected various towns and not city areas of the State in establishing post-migrational habitats appears at once to be another significant

development. On the other hand, though the families and persons belonging to the occupation class of services moved away from East Bengal distinctly in lesser strength than those depending upon agriculture or trade and commerce, yet they gravitated relatively more to urban areas of the receiving country. As a matter of fact, while only 10 out of every 100 refugee family units belonging only to occupation class of bureaucratic and other services had gone to seek shelter in villages of West Bengal, 13 out of 100 family units depending on trade and commerce only went to the same rural areas. In contrast, 20 out of every 100 agricultural family units moved into villages of the State of West Bengal.

(4) Migrants dependent on occupations other than those associated with agriculture, trade and commerce or services were present to the extent of 19% in villages and 5% in the city areas of West Bengal. (Fig. 11).

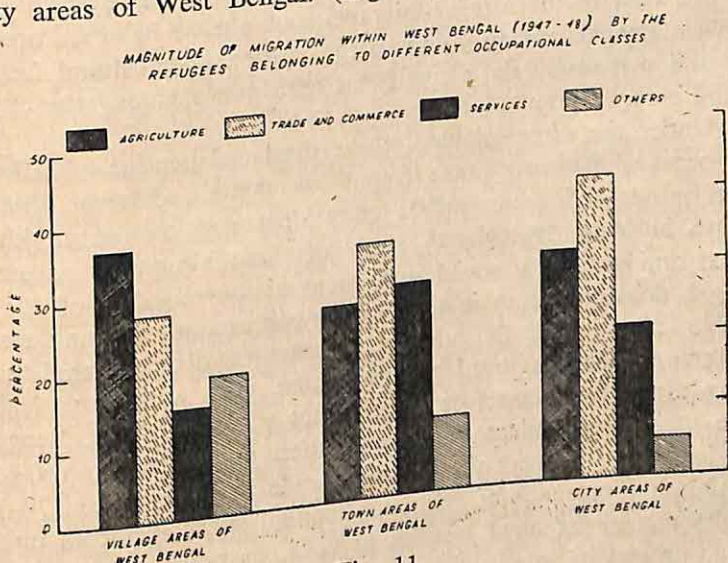


Fig. 11

In addition to the above findings, it was also observed that among the displaced persons surveyed particularly in rural areas of West Bengal, though the single majority was formed by those who came from agricultural families, non-agricultural families and persons taken together actually out-numbered the people who belonged once before migration to the agricultural class. On the other hand, among the displaced population enumerated in towns areas only of the State, the single majority was formed

by those who before migration depended on trade and commerce in East Bengal. Interestingly, of all the refugee families, agricultural families were found to have concentrated in town areas in little more than one-fourth cases only. Again, among the displaced persons who came to *city areas* only of West Bengal depended principally on trade and commerce in East Bengal. It is, however, equally significant that the displaced agricultural families and persons showed after migration their second best concentration in the city areas of the State.

The displaced families and persons belonging to four distinct occupational classes in East Bengal showed several migrational characteristics in 1947-48 and they are: (1) non-agricultural Hindu and other non-Muslim families and persons migrated in greater numbers from East Bengal in general. Even from East Bengal villages such *non-agricultural persons came in greater number than those who depended on agriculture*; (2) the bulk of the refugee-migrants took shelter in urban areas of West Bengal, and in doing so the uprooted agricultural families and persons made a significant appearance among the city-bound refugee population.

Under the circumstances, these displaced persons of different occupation-classes were found to maintain different forms of corporate living in various co-resident and commensal kin-groups in West Bengal. A study of these kin-groups as sustained amidst a new social and economic surrounding of West Bengal, does constitute in the present context an important task (Table 7.3). From the relevant examinations it is gathered that (i) among the displaced persons those who were exclusively living alone by themselves in different places of West Bengal were mainly dependent before migration on agriculture (10%) and least they were connected with trade and commerce (7%). As the very presence of such non-familial single members units (males and/or females) testifies at once, as pointed out earlier, to the process of family disintegration it appears from the above fact that the displaced agricultural families suffered relatively more disintegration (Fig. 12). In general, among the displaced population under reference in 8 out of every 100 units dominance of non-familial single members was quite conspicuous in indicating the extent by which disjunctions in kinship integrity did precipitate in overall societal life of the migrating families in question during a crisis situation.

(ii) On the other hand, it is noted that the refugee-migrants who were dependent in East Bengal on miscellaneous

DIFFERENTIAL DISTRIBUTIONS OF FAMILY STRUCTURES

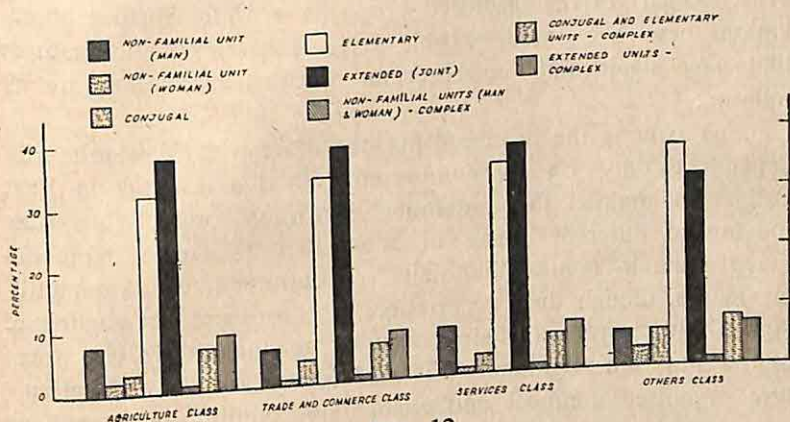


Fig. 12

non-agricultural avocations showed relatively the strongest disposition (52%) after migration for maintaining non-extended family organisations with and without any complex-constituents (patri—and/or matri—kins of unit's head). But, it is pointed out here that those refugees who belonged particularly to the occupation class of trade and commerce or services in East Bengal maintained such non-extended family structures almost in equal strength after migrating to West Bengal.

(iii) Again, it is interesting that irrespective of the character of their occupation the migrants concerned presented no sharp differentiation among themselves in organising joint families in the new habitats within West Bengal. The very fact registering existence of joint family units in 47 out of every 100 co-resident and commensal units of the respective occupation class of agriculture, trade and commerce and services was singularly important in the context of the question of the continuing viability of kinship solidarity among the migrating persons under the exceptional crisis situation prevailed in Bengal (1947-48).

Occupation-class wise variations in the modes of migration and family formation have been separately marked among the displaced population in question and several interesting features come immediately to the notice. But, to appreciate the results of the combined effect of the *three* major social attributes, namely, (i) family structure, (ii) pre-migrational identity for any occupation class (agriculture/trade and commerce/services) and (iii)

mode of migration (from East Bengal to village/town/city areas of West Bengal) of the displaced group as a whole, further observations have been made (Table 7.4). Several notable features that have significantly emerged out of this examination are as follows :

(a) Among the displaced persons those who were primarily dependent only on *agriculture* and allied avocations in East Bengal maintained the undernoted forms of family living after moving to different places of West Bengal. Single members living alone in non-familial units concentrated most dominantly in villages, though their occurrences in cities were not negligible. Again, with respect to their movement to village/town/city areas of the State the migrants of the said occupation class of agriculture organised conjugal and elementary family units *without* any complex-constituents almost in equal strength, but those who formed the same non-extended family units together *with* one or more complex-constituents moved dominantly to villages and least to city areas. On the other hand, those who were living in extended (joint) families *without* any complex-constituents migrated significantly to city and town areas in equal strength. In general, it is of interest to learn that *the displaced population who were particularly required to maintain some patri- and/or matri-kins (complex-constituents) together with all primary family members having face-to-face relation in joint or non-joint units went mostly to villages of West Bengal in search of new settlements* (Fig. 13).

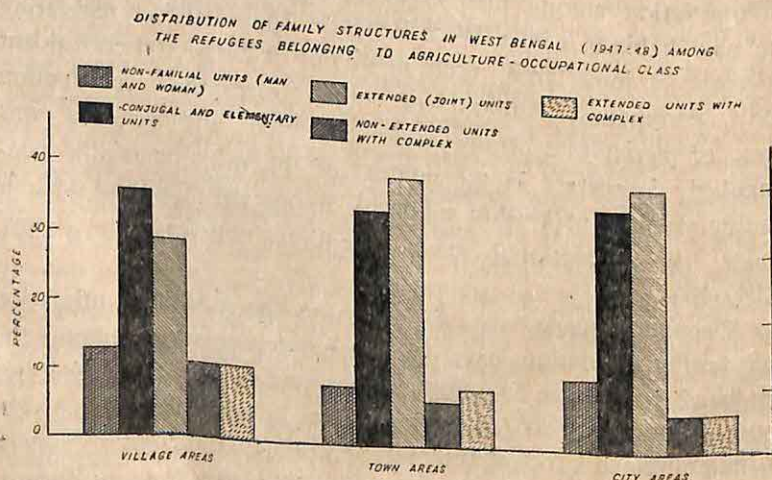


Fig. 13

(b) Secondly, with respect to the displaced persons who depended principally on *trade and commerce only* in East Bengal the undernoted trend in the family formation has been observed to occur among them in different places in West Bengal. Concentration of the migrants (males and females) who were living alone by themselves was relatively highest in city areas. Again, those who were living in non-extended conjugal and simple (elementary) units together *with* and *without* complex-constituents migrated significantly more to rural than to urban areas. On the other hand, those who lived in joint family units *without* any complex-constituents preferred mostly to settle in city areas and least in village areas. But, those who were in the joint family units along *with* some complex-constituents went in maximum strength to towns and not to city areas of the State. In general, *joint family units were more maintained in urban areas and especially in city areas of West Bengal by the migrants who lived prior migration on subsistence drawn from only trade and commerce in East Bengal* (Fig. 14).

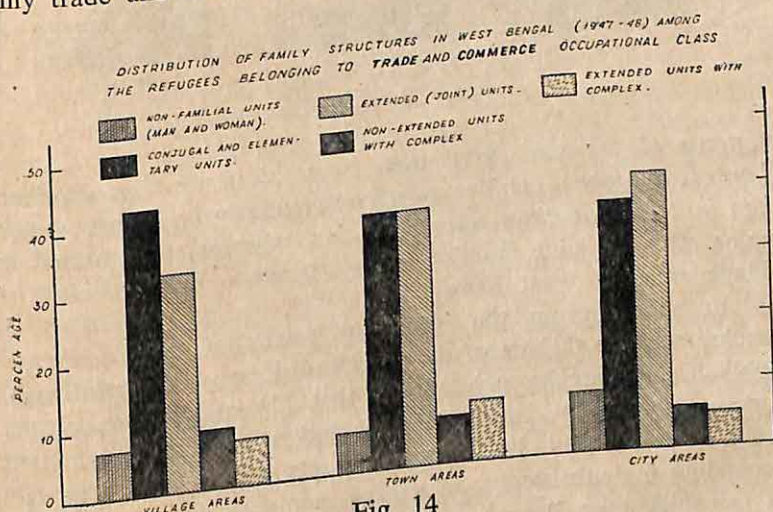


Fig. 14

(c) Thirdly, the refugee-migrants who belonged before migration to bureaucratic, clerical, or any other type of *services* maintained the following forms of family in West Bengal. Among them those who led non-familial single member's life moved to seek shelter in the city areas in largest numbers. On the other hand, the displaced persons who organised non-extended conjugal and elementary units *without* any complex-constituents

went more or less in equal strength to villages and towns, but distinctly in lesser strength to city areas. Further, it is quite interesting that those who formed particularly joint families *with* and *without* complex-constituents migrated mostly to towns and least to villages of West Bengal (Fig. 15). In general, the

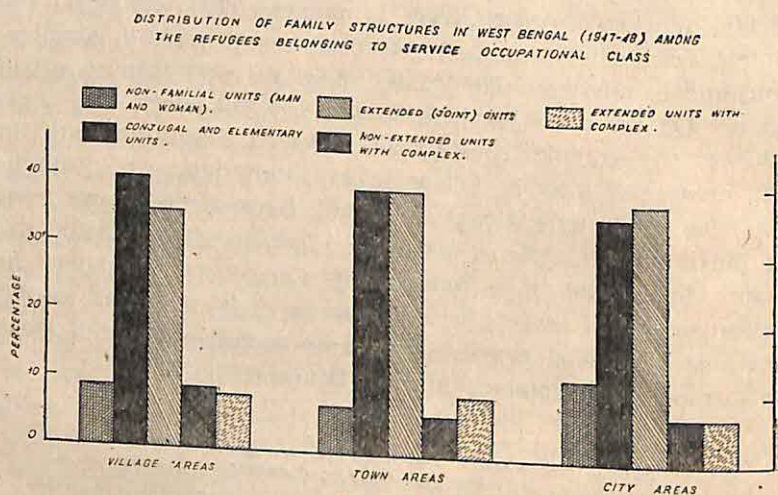


Fig. 15

migrants of the said occupation class of services maintained simple (non-joint) families most conspicuously in villages rather than in towns or cities after migration, whereas they formed in major strength joint families in towns rather than in city or village areas of West Bengal, (1947-48).

In summing up the important trends of socio-economic developments in the life of the displaced persons of West Bengal (1947-48) it may be pointed out that (1) at the time of the survey among the displaced population concerned dominant group was formed by those migrants who were primarily depending for subsistence on various *non-agricultural* avocations in erstwhile East Bengal. This means that during 1946-47 in the early stages of communal disturbances, the non-Muslims who were associated particularly with agriculture and allied activities were prompted in lesser degree to part permanently with their homes and hearths. In general, it appears that with the very start of the social calamity in their places of regular residence, the families of minority groups (non-Muslim) who depended on trade, business and allied commercial activities or on bureaucratic and non-bureaucratic professions reacted more

quickly and vividly in taking far-reaching decisions in favour of migration for good from their hearths and homes in East Bengal.

(2) On the soil of West Bengal the most significant development took place among those refugee families and persons who belonged, before migration, to the occupation class of *agriculture*. Among them the majority was found to have preferred to seek new habitats in villages of West Bengal in consonance with their previous agricultural tradition. But a sizable portion among them settled down conspicuously in the cities of the State. It may be assumed in this context that these agricultural families and persons who sought the fast life of the cities of Calcutta and Howrah promoted themselves willingly or otherwise to the state of a problem group since they were bound to suffer at that time serious incompatibility in adjusting daily living out of miscellaneous non-agriculture avocations suitable only to city dwellers. The non-agricultural displaced families and persons living only by *trade and commerce* went to city surroundings of the State for obvious economic reasons; only a little more than one-fourth of them selected villages for settlement. But, the displaced persons who lived prior migration by bureaucratic and other *services* went in a majority strength after migration to the towns and not to cities of the State, though one fifth among them managed to stick to Calcutta and Howrah, perhaps in the hope of some better employments and/or earnings. Such developments are, indeed, of utmost importance in any sociological appraisal of the migrant groups in question.

(3) Notwithstanding their varying occupational experiences before migration the displaced population under study showed in general a significant development in maintaining *joint families* in singular strength (46%) among themselves immediately after migration. That the displaced persons could maintain kinship integrity in such high magnitude even after facing injurious impact of the crisis situation and migrating to a completely new socio-cultural and economic setting of West Bengal was, indeed, a unique development. Sociologically it is of immediate interest to learn that in spite of utter disorder leading to total uprootment from social and economic life and living in erstwhile East Bengal, the refugee-migrants succeeded well to an appreciable extent in resisting the worst possibilities of family disintegrations under a crisis situation. This success was most probably due to tradition-bound, institutionalised mode of kinship orientation

and functioning prevalent in the Hindu society of Bengal as a whole from long past.

Thus, in the final analysis it emerges that the persistence of cultural norm related principally to the Hindu way of family living was most likely the essential determinant in preserving ultimately the kinship solidarity in as high as 92% of all the total family and non-familial units surveyed among the displaced population (originating in East Bengal from several occupation-classes) in West Bengal, 1947-48.

In the above context some points need special attention. In the Hindu society occupation has traditionally been invested with some significant relations with caste organisation, especially from the standpoint of social stratification. The fact that every human society is internally differentiated and social roles have been differentiated in consonance with social needs has been accepted sociologically long before (Barber: 1957; Bergel: 1962) and in this regard 'congruence of values and functionally differentiated roles' is acclaimed to be most essential for any society to meet its varied problems. Moreover, social stratification by occupational roles is said to be 'only one of several kinds of social differentiation that are relevant to the description and analysis of social behaviour'. Occupation class-wise examination of the displaced migrants, as we have made above, should help to a great extent in outlining the said 'description and analysis of social behaviour' of the people concerned. The occupation classes employed here indicate in fact *social classes* consisting of a set of families that shared equal or nearly equal mutual identifications. Therefore, it may reasonably be expected that each social class amongst the displaced migrants must have acted as 'the unit of intimate solidarity' in meeting the crisis-situation engendered by the Act of Partition and forced eviction. Otherwise, how amongst the given uprooted migrants from East Pakistan joint-family type of extended kingroups should continue to prevail so strongly even after the unprecedented social calamity of 1947-48?

This unique phenomenon of family cohesion may be explained additionally by the fact that 'social and moral order based upon occupational association and interest' (Caplow: 1954) must have persisted in crisis hours amongst the displaced families constituting each social (occupation) class, especially through caste-values and norms. As a major indicator of general social position of the migrants prior migration occupation-classes served also as important source of other social indicators

like income, honorific esteem and group participation. These occupation-classes have been examined in the present study to evaluate different sub-groups among the migrants having somewhat 'distinct standard of life, economically, and, to a considerable extent, intellectually and socially' (Caplow: 1954). Each class is assumed to stand differentiated with others having manners, mores and group-standards peculiar to the kindred occupations constituting any one class concerned and these common elements must have, it is believed, acted together to enjoin professional integrity through the interactions of genealogically related kinship (family) units of the given displaced persons. In short, 'conformity to family mores', was very likely ensured significantly amongst the uprooted migrants by occupational group-solidarity and group-standard of conduct. A tight web of mutual identifications and reciprocity within and between occupation-groups in question must have gone a long way amongst the displaced families under study to counteract effectively possible forces of indiscriminate disintegration. Lastly, in the present sociological study of the displaced people in terms of their pre-migrational socio-economic (occupational) status a profound understanding about their social behaviour in the *crisis-situation* stands amply clear to us.

Table 7.1 : Percentage distribution of the refugees by occupation-classes and areas of migration in East Bengal, 1947-48.

Occupation-class	Area in East Bengal from where migrated			total
	rural areas	urban areas	rural-urban areas	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Agriculture	34.68	16.15	23.30	29.62
Trade and Commerce	36.00	35.74	23.98	35.18
Services	17.60	40.01	48.09	24.78
Others	11.72	8.10	4.63	10.42
All classes	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number of units	(8148)	(2717)	(734)	(11599)

Value of chi-square = 909.801 with 6 d.f.;
probability = less than 0.001.

Table 7.2 : Percentage distribution of the displaced families by occupation-classes and areas of migration in West Bengal, 1947-48.

Occupation-class	Area in West Bengal to where migrated			total
	village areas	town areas	city areas	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Agriculture	37.27	26.72	31.84	29.62
Trade and Commerce	27.91	34.57	41.78	35.18
Services	15.42	28.78	20.91	24.78
Others	19.40	9.93	5.47	10.42
All classes	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number of units	(1881)	(7011)	(2707)	(11599)

Value of chi-square = 463.410 with 6 d.f.;
probability = less than 0.001.

Table 7.3 : Percentage distribution of the refugee families and persons by occupation-class in West Bengal, 1947-48.

Family structure	Occupation-class				total
	agri- culture	trade and commerce	services	others	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Non-familial unit (man)	7.94	6.40	7.45	5.62	7.03
Non-familial units (woman)	2.44	0.51	0.80	3.39	1.46
Conjugal	3.38	4.34	3.24	6.45	4.00
Elementary	32.07	34.51	35.28	36.64	34.20
Extended (joint)	37.78	39.09	38.41	32.26	37.82
Non-familial (man)—complex*	0.64	0.41	0.31	0.41	0.46
Non-familial (woman)—complex	0.38	0.32	0.24	0.50	0.34

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Conjugal—complex	0.87	1.25	0.80	2.40	1.15
Elementary—complex	5.62	5.25	5.29	5.71	5.41
Extended—complex	8.88	7.92	8.18	6.62	8.13
All structures	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number of units	(3436)	(4080)	(2874)	(1209)	(11599)

Value of chi-square = 179.253 with 27 d.f.;
probability = less than 0.001.

* 'Complex'—constituent of a family refers to any female patrikins and/or matrikins of the head (ego).

Table 7.4 : Percentage distribution of the migrant family structures by the occupation class of Agriculture/Trade and Commerce/Services and areas of migration from East Bengal to village/city/town areas of West Bengal, 1947-48.

Family structures	Refugees migrating from East Bengal to West Bengal in			
	village areas	town areas	city areas	total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Agriculture—occupation class				
Non-familial units	13.27	9.02	11.25	10.45
(man and woman)	36.38	34.70	36.54	35.50
Conjugal & elementary units	28.81	40.04	40.14	37.78
Extended (joint) units				
Non-extended family & non-	10.56	7.00	6.27	7.54
familial units with complex	10.98	9.24	5.80	8.73
Extended units with complex				
All structures	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number of units	(701)	(1873)	(862)	(3436)

Value of chi-square = 53.140 with 8 d.f.;
probability = less than 0.001.

Trade & Commerce— occupation class

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Non-familial units				
(man and woman)	7.43	5.94	8.75	6.91
Conjugal & elementary units	43.24	38.70	37.67	38.99
Extended (joint) units	33.14	39.15	42.35	39.27
Non-extended family & non-familial units with complex	8.95	7.38	5.84	7.16
Extended units with complex	7.24	8.83	5.39	7.37
All structures	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number of units	(525)	(2442)	(1131)	(4080)

Value of chi-square = 37.123 with 8 d.f.;
probability = less than 0.001.

Service—occupation class

Non-familial units				
(man & woman)	8.62	7.04	12.37	8.25
Conjugal & elementary units	39.66	38.55	36.40	38.24
Extended (joint) units	35.17	38.65	37.98	38.17
Non-extended family & non-familial units with complex	8.62	6.39	6.71	6.68
Extended units with complex	7.93	9.37	6.54	8.66
All structures	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number of units	(290)	(2018)	(566)	(2874)

Value of chi-square = 22.971 with 8 d.f.;
probability lies between 0.01 & 0.001.

CHAPTER 8

SOCIOLOGY OF DISPLACED PERSONS

Partition of India, precisely with respect to Bengal and the Punjab, turned out to be a critical demand in mid 1940s on *political* considerations coloured by long-standing Hindu-Muslim (communal) antagonism. Religious parochiality and communal dogmatism prevailed miserably on social and economic realities of the contemporary societies in the country. To this was added surreptitiously diabolical role of British Power. Communal bargainings under the disguise of constitutional rearrangements were given free indulgence to ensure transfer of power in such manner that British motives, interests and managements might remain unimpaired. Immediately after the end of the Second World War the issue of transfer of power to the hands of the Indians became imminent, extremely pressing and complicated. As a result, the period from 1946 to 1948 became extraordinarily loaded with unprecedented socio-political developments and reactions. To crown this situation came the historical decision of Partition of India on August 15, 1947. National leaders of both the Hindu and the Muslim communities of the country welcomed and accepted the decision which was, nodoubt, fraught with many undesirable, if not explosive, consequences. Dominions of India and Pakistan graced the international assembly of independent countries amidst horrible tensions and utter chaos. Catastrophic developments swept soon Bengal, Bihar and the Punjab only to institute bitterness of hostility, mistrust and mass-killing in such a gigantic but melancholic scale that the entire world became thoroughly transfixed and horrified. The affected people who were on the other day living quietly in mutual understanding and reciprocal interactions with their neighbours found themselves overnight in the role of 'enemy' to each other. In the wave of enmity and murder many lost lives and many met with forced eviction off their homeland due to a political decision (West Bengal Govt. : 1953; State Stat. Bureau : 1956).

The Hindus, the Sikhs, the Muslims and the Tribals suffered alike untold violence and massacre immediately before and after partition in the affected Provinces concerned. Hundreds of thousands of persons found themselves abruptly in the wretched position of 'refugee' and a forced exodus of teeming millions

continued to build up the saddest chapter of the recent history of this country. These displaced persons or refugees brought with them several staggering problems. Problems were (*and are still*) administrative, social, economic and psychological in nature. We are concerned here mainly with social problems pertaining to kinship organisations of the displaced persons of West Bengal. In this regard we are interested more in giving meaningful 'description and explanation of social facts' associated with the life and living of the uprooted people concerned. Faced with the unprecedented phenomenon of forced migration of a colossal number of non-Muslims from East Pakistan we have attempted so far to go straight to the *effects* (and also to causes) of *permanent shifts of population under a crisis situation*.

'The effect of partition was decisive since it created the notion that the Muslims were to be absolute masters in Pakistan and the Hindus in the country called India. This notion was nothing but a vague, almost instinctive belief held among the masses; it was never publicly and deliberately countenanced as a *matter of policy* by either Government. However, they may be, the masses, who were then emerging from a long period of subjection, were suddenly inflamed by a feverish desire for power which frequently broke out into mob hysteria. Neither moral principles nor religious beliefs, neither individual reflexion nor the most elementary respect for human dignity, could check the explosion of men's instincts' (Vernant : 1953). These instincts were so dreadfully corrosive in nature that a few hundreds of thousands of families belonging to minority groups were compelled to leave for ever their ancestral homes and hearths severing habitual relations and associations with local neighbours and institutions. Tragic and terrible happenings in the shape of arson, loot and murder accelerated the pace of the said 'explosion of men's instincts'. Millions and millions swarmed across the border in those dark days of 1947 and 1948 being bewildered, dispirited, and homeless to create a *problem group* by themselves in India.

With this grim situation in view we agree to the postulate that 'when population are *uprooted* and moved to some distant land, the *process* has lasting effects both on society and on the individual. . . . Flight and the compulsory displacement of population engender a considerable amount of contemporary feeling, and this has tended to affect both social attitudes and individual objectivity' (Murphy : 1955). The uprooted persons in view had obviously a bundle of reasons to experience this 'feeling'

while organising their post-migrational life and living in West Bengal or in any other places within India. Development of the feeling of 'we-group' and 'they-group' came to dominate in instituting a sharp contrast between the refugees and the non-refugees (Saksena : 1961). One can vouchsafe hardly today that this feeling has disappeared fully. The Government and local public appeared as the 'they-group' to the refugee-settlers and a covert prejudice overburdened the uprooted mass of humanity in question. That the refugees from Pakistan belonged to a *specific social category* by virtue of their evicted position in contrast to non-displaced citizens of India who provided them with shelter as well as to all other non-Indian foreigners (not refugee) living in the country seemed to be an obvious reflection for one and all who might care to render rehabilitation-reliefs in any form. *The displaced persons had (still seem to have) no human choice to exercise their own discretions*, rather they had to make themselves all things to all men and to agree with the changed circumstances in post-partitioned years.

The persons who were driven out of Pakistan definitely but for some *political reasons* came as helpless casualty, diminished in all circumstances. They were forced to give up all social, cultural and economic relationships with their regular homes (ancestral or otherwise) and were often compelled to live at a lower social and financial level (than they had been used to) in the receiving States of India. They became the victims of some worst political-communal events for which at least they can never be held responsible. With no fault of their own they suffered and are still suffering 'staggering uncertainty' since the period of partition, to receive reasonable charitable assistance and rehabilitation in the hands of the Government and the local people of India. Under most painful circumstances the non-muslim minorities had to seek shelters in more and more numbers in India only to include themselves in a *special category* earmarked for the refugee or displaced population. A feeling of being unwelcome was (and is) not totally absent in many quarters with most of the uprooted Hindus and other non-muslims.

Their frightful dispersion from the land of terror and persecution was *no ordinary phenomenon of migration*. In India where the families rarely leave their land and homes unless they are forced from it, we can well understand the magnitude and severity of the problems linked with incessant movements of hundreds and thousands of non-muslim minorities from Pakis-

tan. To produce a refugee-group and concomitant changes—social, economic, demographic and psychological—in the affected society what tremendous social-political forces are required need certainly no elaborate explanation. Amongst the displaced persons ‘one said good-bye *not just to a plot of land but to one’s entire tradition*, one’s home life, and one’s language group, the shrines of one’s fathers.... In the case of Indian refugees there was a loss of homeland, a process catapulting one into a world of increasing miseries and no clear future whatever’ (Murphy : 1953). This fundamental aspect of the emerging refugee-society gained very little respect in post-partition days in the bureaucratic circles in particular and in Indian society at large in general. Upshot was that the refugees as ‘a group of straggling sufferers’ continued to confound official measures of relief and rehabilitation. In spite of all expensive measures of rehabilitation the unavoidable problems of healthy *assimilation* of the refugees into the country’s social-economic structures and again, the vital problems of adjustment with new social-political climate persist even to-day in India.

In the above context one has to re-think how far the displaced persons’ ‘feeling of neglect and/or under-representation’ in the hands of local non-refugee persons, government functionaries and local institutions were (and are) sustaining the artificial cleavage of ‘we-group’ and ‘they-group’? To what extent the displaced people who in majority cases were forced into some ‘unaccustomed dwellings’ with no homes of their own and again, were forced to eke out very often their existence with ‘pitiful and often submarginal activities’, felt (and still feel) socially devaluated and/or neglected in their desperate search for ‘the general mentality’ of their new land of settlement? In what way the refugees were (and are) subjected officially to knavish manoeuvres in the name of charity, benevolence and development? Did they receive due treatments as *human beings* in the hands of the benefactors concerned? Sociological assessment of these *basic* problems in time could have paved the way of healthy merging of the marginal group of refugees with the general population of the country within at least the last twenty years. But, *the refugee problems are still a reality in present day West Bengal*, if not in India.

The problems experienced by the displaced families and persons since their arrival in this country were *not wholly and only economic in nature*, though anxiety for economic rehabilitation of the uprooted was in limelight. Sociological and

psychological evaluations of the people dominated hardly the actions of the administrators and patrons. In general, compassion and charitable dispositions were in the van of all measures directed in ameliorating the wretched group of refugees who were (and are) still weathering a storm. Being evicted nastily from their homeland in Eastern Pakistan the Hindus and other non-muslims were naturally at their wit's end and under the circumstances they had to suffer all-round devaluations in securing a satisfactory but safe shelter and a marginal living. They sacrificed the very way of life with which they were for generations accustomed and contended. In their new habitats in India almost everything was at variance with their previous experiences and activities. The effect of a catastrophe diffused heavily through their family organisations, professional structures, mental make-up and above all, the very ethos of life. *Overnight a group of human beings turned into a group of refugees, the constituents of which appeared problematic more economically than socially and/or psychologically.*

Social losses and disadvantages sustained with abnormal rapidity by the refugees were (and are still) equated in general with economic losses and derangements. Net result was that economic rehabilitation of the displaced persons constituted the be-all and end-all of contemporary measures taken in official circles. Truly, millions and millions have already been spent to resolve refugee-problems, yet to all appearance the refugees of West Bengal are still into a vortex. In the very interest of the refugees need for their quick but smooth *assimilation in the existing social milieu* of West Bengal cannot be a matter of debate, but in spite of our best efforts (mostly economic) various social factors remain, indeed, operative to impede such assimilation. Refugee problems continue unabating in multiple forms and colours. Recently from an official report released by Government of India for 1966-67 it has been learnt that till 31.3.1967 about 4800 millions of rupees had been spent for rehabilitation measures and of this amount 2615 millions of rupees were allocated only for rehabilitating the refugees from East Pakistan.

It has been pointed out interestingly that 26 percent of the displaced households which were surveyed in 1960-61 in West Bengal still considered themselves as refugees. 'But the incidence of this phenomenon of counting oneself as refugee shows a marked variation, namely : the incidence is the highest in the cities, the lowest in the villages with the towns coming in-between in this respect' (Bandyopadhyay and Chattopadhyay : 1965).

Even after long fourteen years since Partition a sizable portion of displaced families and persons were conscious enough to offer a wide berth from local inhabitants of the State. Under the circumstances, economic reasons cannot be solely responsible to keep alive the feeling of 'we-group' in contrast to 'they-group' among them. Social-psychological causes must have played a decisive role in thwarting due adjustment and assimilation which always remain to be the 'key to organized social life' of the uprooted population in question.

It is extremely instructive to learn from the above study (1965) that differential dispositions as shown by the displaced families and persons with respect to *social assimilation*, was, of course, oriented under diverse objective conditions. On the whole, the response of the displaced families as 'refugee' or not 'seems to be intrinsically associated with the *material bases* of their respective life and living. Those among the displaced people who are still pursuing relatively less stable livelihood, have less security of settlement, are more burdened with *familial obligations*, etc., tend to identify and isolate themselves from the local social *milieu* as 'refugees'. The scope of acquiring the material or economic bases, and consequently the feasibility of adjustment of the displaced persons within the local social *milieu*, has been offered the maximum by the villages and the minimum by the cities of Calcutta and Howrah'. This conclusion reveals the crux of the refugee-problems with which the administrators, social workers, and planners remain deeply concerned for more than two decades. On the merit of the above empirical findings it may be stated that rehabilitation of the refugees cannot be achieved alone with political-cum-bureaucratic orders and/or economic assistances. *Their problems were (and still are) problems in human relationships* and the same threatens seriously contemporary socio-economic life of the refugees in West Bengal. As a result, 'the important aspirations of many people' are getting impeded. This should have guided the formulation of a *correct social policy* for the refugees of the State.

Descriptive sociology of the displaced persons of West Bengal is currently quite rich to offer much exact and reliable information about many important matters that are linked intimately with the social policy meant for the people in question. In this respect one should consider carefully the following facts which speak well for the refugees who saw life as human being in leaving one's hearth and home for ever or in searching a foothold in the foster-States of India. These facts would more-

over expose those *social potentials* with which the people who met all special treatments under the singular category of displaced migrants continue to struggle not to shrink into insignificance.

(1) In the *initial phase* of mass migration (1946-48) the refugees came in largest extent from those areas of East Pakistan where *level of education was higher* but per capita land areas was lower with corresponding lower dependence on agricultural occupations. Amongst these migrants about eighty percent belonged probably to middle classes ("Bhadralok class") which depended on their better education and technical knowledge than on manual work for their living. But after migration a little more than half of the total refugee families were forced to live in starvation condition and only one-twentieth of the total were living in comfort. Before coming to West Bengal the largest number of refugee earners had some sort of service as their means of livelihood and next to them were those who were associated with medium or petty trade. *A very limited number of the actual tillers of the soil migrated to this State.* This phenomenon occurred since cultivators having lands for ensuring maintenance, could scarcely take the risk of leaving behind such lands for migrating to West Bengal or other places where sufficient lands would not be readily available for them. On average 1.6 earners per displaced family having average size of 5.4 had to bear the burden of uncertainty and sub-marginal earnings. Before migration a little more than one-fifth of total displaced persons were unemployed, but after migration a little more than one-third of the total were found unemployed. People from practically all occupations swelled the number of unemployed and of petty service holders, highest losses being occurred in the agricultural group of occupations. In post-migration period more than half (58%) of total refugee families and persons were enjoying monthly income not exceeding Rs. 100, though among the migrants less than one third only were illiterate. It is quite significant that about one-tenth of these refugees had education ranging from matriculation level to graduate and above levels. These refugees were mostly Hindus (91%) and scheduled caste Hindus were present in little less than one-tenth cases (Chakravarti : 1949).

(2) The Government of West Bengal made a survey of the displaced persons by the end of 1950 and observed that 54% of the migrants settled in rural and 46% in urban areas. The people migrating from border areas in East Pakistan mostly took refu-

ge to those districts in West Bengal which are contiguous to their home districts. Moreover, the refugees dispersing from the interior of Eastern Pakistan came mostly to Calcutta, 24-Parganas and Nadia. The largest population of refugees migrated from the districts of Dacca, Faridpur and Barisal in East Pakistan. Of these displaced persons 76 per cent was explained by the caste Hindus alone and in very little more than one-fifth cases the scheduled caste people dominated and most of them took refuge especially in 24-Parganas and Nadia. On the other hand, 57.5 percent of total refugees was within the age group of 15-55 and 36.5 percent was accounted by the youngsters of the age-group of 0-15. Persons above 55 years were present in only 5.9% cases. The age-distribution differed very insignificantly from what was found for general population of West Bengal. The most glaring feature of the migrants was related with their education levels. As high as 48 percent of total migrants was literates. This was, indeed, a high figure of literacy, much higher than the State average here, but this was due to the fact that more well-to-do and educated persons migrated in much larger numbers than the poorer and the illiterates. (State Statistical Bureau : 1951; Census Report : 1951).

(3) By the beginning of 1951 more displaced families and persons from East Pakistan were compelled to join their compatriots and co-sufferers residing in West Bengal. Community-wise composition of the refugees revealed that the caste Hindus (76%), Scheduled castes (21%) and Scheduled tribes (2.5%) dominated in varying strength. Of these displaced people 73 percent was unemployed in the State and those who were employed earned in majority strength from some sort of agricultural occupations, and then from service-type of callings. In 82 percent cases these migrants did not earn more than Rs. 250 in Pakistan, while in West Bengal 94 percent of the same people was within the income group of Re. 1—Rs. 250. Number of earners per family was 1.44, where as number of dependants per earner was 2.75. It is known that after their migration per capita annual income among the refugees was Rs. 722, maximum being found for those who were in service-type of occupations (Rs. 1034 per capita) and minimum for agricultural-linked migrants (Rs. 391 per capita). We have learnt also that there was nothing unusual in the distribution in respect of sex, civil condition and age. This indicates that a refugee family generally

migrated to West Bengal as a whole (State Statistical Bureau : 1951).

(4) In 1956 it was estimated that the number of refugees from erstwhile East Bengal was over 36 lakhs; of whom 28 lakhs were in West Bengal, while the 1951-Census Report gave the figure for total displaced persons from East Bengal as 20.99 lakhs. This Report says that (a) the density of displaced population per square mile of West Bengal was 68, and the same varied from 3.5 in Bankura to 13,404 in Calcutta; (b) 'the areas of greatest density offer attractions of petty trade, cottage craft, small industries, vegetable raising and jobs of various types'; (c) 'the agricultural districts of West Bengal have not attracted the refugees, a comparatively small portion of whom were agriculturists. *The recent influx shows larger percentage of agriculturists,* and the composition of displaced population is now undergoing marked changes'; (d) by necessity the displaced population 'must hug closely those areas which easily offer employment or help and markets for produce and products'; (e) in occupations like petty trade and shop-keeping the concentration of the refugees was singular (2024 per 10,000 displaced population) and this event 'can be good for *a population which has not found roots in the soil of its adaptation yet* and whom the hazards of wholesale and retail markets might send spinning any day'; (f) the refugees who depended on other services and miscellaneous sources for livelihood thronged most dominantly in West Bengal (1951), as 3668 per 10,000 displaced population reported to have subsistence from the said sources. This feature 'can only mean that this population is not conspicuous for the service it renders in the production of food or in turning the wheels of industry in the State, but in earning living from occupations which do not add to the wealth of the country, nor assist directly in the capital formation. In so far as it is engaged in that kind of livelihood, it is unproductive and capital consuming'; (g) the refugee population was composed of 'about 40% agriculturists and 60% non-agriculturists' by 1951, and (h) *the influx of the Hindus and tribal people from East Pakistan to West Bengal since 1946 amounted to 'fifty year's normal growth of the State packed over again into the crowded space of five years only* (Census Report : 1951; West Bengal : Land and People : 1956).

The above facts and figures tell very clearly the tale of the displaced Hindus and other evicted people residing in West Bengal. Keeping these facts and figures in the forefront we shall

have to merit the sociological examinations made in this treatise. Such comprehensive examination was hardly attempted before and as such a very important lacuna continued to exist in our understanding about the migrants in question. In spite of various social, economic and demographic information available for the refugees nothing was known about the pattern of their *family structures* in direct consonance with other societal systems like caste and occupation. Their social behaviour under a crisis situation had not earlier been fully substantiated, though some inklings exist in the above-noted facts. When the very existence of organised family life of the Hindu and other refugees was seriously exposed under critical stress, what was the pattern of reactions on family level? How the affected families and persons reacted 'to pull together the fragments of a life lost' in the wake of communal feuds and carnages? Did *familism*, the key note of social existence of the evicted Hindus and other minorities, suffer any big changes that went back beyond human control due to unprecedented contraventions and conflicts in former East Bengal? Answers to these problems have for the first time been attempted in this discourse. In doing so, we have also achieved to indicate the social consequences which the Hindu and other non-Muslim refugee families had to face particularly in an abnormal, crisis situation.

'Social changes, rapid in some cases, slow in others, had characterized all societies . . . ' (Gillin and Gillin : 1945). The Hindu society of East Pakistan was obviously not free from the impact of this universal phenomenon but the changes came with so abnormal rapidity in 1946-47 amongst the minorities of that geographical tract in East Pakistan that a train of disturbing complications gave birth to a 'precipitate crisis' (Elliot and Elliot : 1941). This crisis occasioned 'a sudden break in the habits of the group and the necessity for immediate action'. Quite a staggering number of these non-Muslim minorities had done with ancestral home only to make the best of a bad bargain. In East Bengal many individuals and families of local non-Muslim communities were all suddenly involved in varying degrees in this displacement process. Social disorganization or 'a breakdown in the equilibrium of forces' appeared obvious and more acutely manifested within a crisis period. 'Man's inhumanity to man' took the form of irresistible pressures forcing minority group to migrate for good. The human tragedy of the non-Muslim minorities and especially of the Hindus of East Pakistan represents truly a 'deliberate act

of social disorganisation' on a scale and with a ferocity perhaps unequalled in the post-war world.

The facts and figures presented at length in this discourse help considerably to pinpoint a grim legacy of social disorganization suffered by the refugee-migrants concerned. In the brighter aspect of this problem one may observe that the displaced persons were not forced to live exclusively in a 'different world' while settling in the recipient State of West Bengal and moreover, they were never cut off permanently by the 'impenetrable barrier of a strange set of definitions'. Yet, fully unbiased *humane understanding and action* which are so necessary to ensure healthy *assimilation* of any displaced group lapsed not infrequently on the part of the sedentary, local inhabitants of the State in making the uprooted people once more confused and frustrated. At bottom, the refugees were treated in innumerable cases with such top-sided intelligence and motive that their familial and interpersonal problems deteriorated (and are still not infrequently deteriorating in this State) from bad to worst position. In many occasions *human touch* seemed perceptibly missing in various rehabilitation measures designed for 'a cultured and highly vocal minority' of East Pakistan.

These non-Muslim minorities from East Pakistan are no ordinary migrants. 'Many of the high caste Hindus in the East wing (of Pakistan) are people of great personal gifts, who before 1947 played a prominent part in the existing political and intellectual and artistic life of undivided Bengal, holding big posts in Calcutta University, in the law and other professions, and in some of the mercantile firms, . . . Even now, sixteen years after Partition, the *dissatisfied, unassimilated* Hindu community of East Wing remains one of the major flaws, the obvious weaknesses, of the Pakistani State. . . . Subdivided along economic lines, the subcontinent's [India] displaced persons, *the human debris of the 1947 catastrophe*, classify themselves as those always poor, and those who once were rich (and may get rich again); on the other hand, the largely illiterate masses, urban and rural, the peasants and landless labourers, artisans, and petty merchants; on the other, the educated upper and middle classes, aristocrats, land lords, professional and business men'. (Stephens: 1963). With this *basic* social composition and cultural background should the displaced persons be treated in blanket terms indiscriminately? Completely disregarding the issue of *differential social origin, status, and dignity of the respective refugee*

family or non-familial person no useful measure of rehabilitation can naturally be achieved. But, unfortunately displaced persons have always been treated exclusively as 'refugees' and, as it were, as the 'second citizens' of the State. *They were (and are) viewed not infrequently more as some economic than social beings.* Net result was that all measures for economic resettlements dominated in greater force than those needed equitably for social (and/or cultural) and psychological rehabilitations of the evicted people concerned. Refugee problems continue to make confusion worse confounded in West Bengal, the offspring of Partition.

The displaced people have mostly not yet integrated themselves unequivocally to the social *milieu* of the receiving State and thereby their multifarious problems still remain alive to expose a kind of *social distinction* among them as a group. It is most probable that but for such acquired distinction the displaced Hindus and other non-Muslims of erstwhile East Bengal have been feeling distressed in deciding how to halt between two opinions. At the time of day with the common background of Bengali tradition, a pervasive Hindu religion, ties of common national kinship, similar systems of cultural values, and familiar patterns for community behaviour the displaced persons concerned should not have any formidable hinderances to resolve problems of accommodation and *assimilation*. Close primary contacts—social and otherwise—with the local, sedentary population seem reasonably to be the most important vehicles to augment inter-group sympathy, affection and congeniality and wherever the displaced migrants used this vehicle with discreet craft and practical sense the discordant feelings of 'we-group' and 'they-group' had to lose flaming vigour. The trend of developmental studies on the displaced population of West Bengal (Mukherjee : 1965; Bandhyopadhyay & Chattapadhyay : 1965) is potent enough to justify the said assumption. It seems that more the displaced population continue to adhere to their acquired *social distinction* as 'refugees' for enjoying special economic privileges, social prerogatives and general benefactions, more they would reasonably be drifting away from any good prospect of social assimilation in the absorbing society of West Bengal.

To look critically into another aspect of the problem of social *assimilation* we should not forget the fact that the persons of all social classes came from East Pakistan to settle in West Bengal and yet a cultivator, an artisan, a trader or a service-holder

amongst this migrant population had had to suffer only because of their *refugee-status* a distinction without a difference from their respective counterparts residing in West Bengal. Being out at elbows ever since their forced eviction from ancestral homeland most of the bewildered and destitute migrants had to make themselves all things to all men in absorbing the impact of changed circumstances generated by a crisis. Post-migrational life and living of the East Bengal Hindus and other non-muslims who had to yield their palms to a most calamitous situation, appeared definitely not every encouraging to them in large majority cases.

What a grim situation the refugees faced after migration may be to some extent understood from the following excerpts : 'The humiliation of having, even for a while, to depend on public charity; the tiny daily dents to self-esteem involved in sharing perhaps cramped quarters with distant relatives or 'in-laws' after loss of home; the continuous mental harking back to the past, in the oldfolk almost unrestrainable; among the younger, the flowering of memories of happy times and surroundings now lost' (Stephens : 1963). Or, as it has been observed by Murphy (1953) that the East Bengal refugees were 'a group of villagers, accustomed to effective and competent farming in their own land, now thrown on to a type of soil which they did not know how to cultivate, with practically no equipment, with no guarantees from the government, with not even a fairly bearable day-by-day existence'. Or, 'the Hindus had not only left behind possessions of a greater value, but above all often occupied a higher position in social scale; having abandoned all their property they found themselves without their normal sources of income, nor were they able to take up their old professions except in very rare cases . . . the refugees included so many from the middle class, uprooted and penniless, that made the problem of professional reassignment such a difficult one' (Vernant : 1953).

From an official record we have in this regard learnt additionally that 'every displaced family is likely to view whatever assistance is given to it against the background of its pre-partitioned status, and much of the criticism and discontent has been engendered by the fact that for obvious reasons it has not been possible to restore every displaced family to the status it held in Pakistan' (Government of India : 1950).

With these examples depicting the most disadvantageous

position of the East Bengal Hindus and other migrants can it not be suggested that the factor of value considerations (Mukherjee : 1965) came to play a crucial role amongst the displaced population in fanning into a flame their feelings of social dissatisfaction and mental dissociation? Would it be very unreasonable to believe that because of some very overt and stiff discrimination made between refugees and non-refugees all efforts which might have with all seriousness been directed for harmonious assimilation of the displaced migrants had lost into contemptible despair? On the contrary, it appears that if the social institutions like family, caste, etc., of these refugee-migrants were (and are still) given proper and penetrative attention in formulating the social policy of relief and rehabilitation then the problems of displaced population that still persist in the country could have been solved adequately to everybody's satisfaction. Obvious relationship between these social institutions and the issue of absorption of displaced persons should have been given the top priority to gain necessary insights into the problems of social interactions between the migrants and the sedentary, local people of West Bengal. (Sen & Sen : 1953; Murphy : 1955; Sengupta : 1965 ; Pakrasi : 1966 & 1967).

With some unfamiliar way of life and means of living the displaced families might be compelled to live on *sub-human* level for sometimes, but for all time how they can be expected simply because of their temporary refugee-status to sell one's birthright as a *social being* for a mass of pottage? After all, the displaced persons being largely a 'cultured and highly vocal minority' of East Pakistan cannot incidentally be asked to dispense with their own cultural values and honest aspirations related to a decent living only to suit the incommodious socio-economic situation prevailing in the foster State of West Bengal or India, especially between 1947-50. Though they were evicted from homeland and turned overnight into refugees the behaviour of displaced members had certainly not undergone any basic transformation as human beings to snap the links of those customs and aspiration, which prescribe the standards of family behaviour and family living in the Hindu society. Moreover, when the displaced people could maintain family integrity in as high as 92% cases immediately after the calamity in 1947-48, it is imperative that 'an understanding of family relations . . . must be concerned with an analysis, first, of the impact of changing conditions and culture upon the economic and social basis of the (modern) family, and second,

of the interaction of the members of the family as affected by this changed situation' (Burgess and Locke : 1960).

A sociological fact is well-known that a *crisis* brings immediately family relationship to 'the test of emotional strain, revealing their strong points and their weaknesses.' Similarly, there is no reason to disagree with the fact that the adaptability of the family members determines the ease of adjustment to a crisis. With regard to the displaced families it is absolutely clear that with differential treatment, opportunity and understanding they did show both strong and weak points in making themselves assimilated in the social *milieu* of the receiving State. It may be noted that the differential social behaviours as evinced by the displaced family members and the non-familial persons belonging to several castes and occupational classes, do considerably evoke 'penetrating description' of the 'general problem of differential vulnerability of groups to apparently similar stress' (Hansen : 1965). With the sociological *problem of family vulnerability to stress* in view the present study may especially be merited to understand the implication of *intra-group variations* found amongst the displaced persons concerned in the functional aspects of the social policy of relief and rehabilitation. Refugee problems can hardly be solved satisfactorily by accepting only their economic needs as the prime factor. Social and cultural needs, and psychological dispositions of the evicted migrants should have received foremost consideration in sifting to the bottom their general socio-economic condition (including the life and living on family level) which was existing before as well as after migration.

In tune with the plea that 'disaster, a type of crisis with devastating effects upon families, should be studied. Disasters considered as a mass rather than an individual phenomenon are of many different kinds . . . Each kind of disaster has its particular aspects, but they all have in common the elements of the unexpected and the sudden' (Burgess and Locke : 1960), the refugee migrants of West Bengal have in this discourse been studied to show especially how a crisis situation linked up with communal persecutions, forced eviction and sudden *en masse* flight towards almost an unknown destiny affected their family life and living immediately after migration. Besides other familial characteristics shown by the displaced persons one important feature is evident that in spite of the social disaster

precipitated in 1946-47 exigency for non-familial mode of living could prevail in not more than 8 per cent cases.

Though it has been asserted in certain sociological studies on family that the breakdown of the basic family group is perhaps the most disorganizing factor in the experience of the immigrant' (Elliot and Merrill : 1941), or, 'movement to a new location removes persons from the social restraints and social controls of primary relationship allows them to express overtly behaviour which previously had been inhibited because of social pressure, and this makes it possible for the divergent patterns to become more firmly entrenched in the variant individuals' (Burgess and Locke : 1960), we have to re-think about these propositions with particular reference to the displaced families of West Bengal, if not of India as a whole. Moreover, the experiences that we have drawn from the present examination of the refugee families and persons of West Bengal (1947-48) do not offer ready support to those experiences which tell that 'the chief disorganizing effect of mobility is that it *individualizes* the person by detaching him from his family and other personal associations' (Burgess and Locke : 1960). Contextually, we would like to labour this point that in order to assess the social consequences faced in a crisis by the refugees, especially in their family organisation, we should try at the very outset to have an understanding about the general problem of family vulnerability to different stress. The nature and extent of vulnerability of displaced families to unprecedented stress in 1947-48 may be understood considerably from the sociological examinations attempted in the present study. From the standpoint of *family sociology* the findings observed in the present discourse are likely to shed new lights firstly on social problems related to family integration, adaptability and disorganization and secondly, on the current theories of families under stress (Angell : 1936; Hansen & Hill : 1964; Koos : 1946; Hill : 1949).

Changes in family form and organisation are inevitable and to be desired in consonance with dynamic equilibrium of human societies. Structural modifications from generation to generation were and will be there, but the rate of change has recently undergone perceptible modifications, especially in technologically developed countries. In this respect the common phenomenon of mobility has even been given universal recognition as a powerful factor guiding 'a maximum of change both in residence and in culture'. It has been stated that 'the periods of social upheaval

result in a great shifting of the mass of individuals. At the end of such upheavals they find themselves in quite a new social position, among quite new and inimical persons, while they are already isolated from their previous friends. As a result, their social isolation and loneliness are likely to increase greatly (Sorokin : 1927). The displaced persons of West Bengal under study were truly the victims of a great social upheaval and they found themselves certainly in 'a new social position', *but not amongst 'inimical persons'*. Although they got isolated from their 'previous friends', they could by degrees develop a new ring of acquaintances. Their 'social isolation' did persist mainly because of (1) the factor of differential self-consciousness within the migrants and (2) the factor of differential inter-communications with local communities. For the refugee group as a whole necessary adjustment with and adoption of 'new patterns of behaviour' of the people of the receiving State would, no doubt, gradually help to minimise the influences of the said two factors and thereby to break the isolation. In this adjustment process loneliness, restlessness and demoralisation and other social-psychological developments as prevailed among the uprooted minorities, would diminish. But, under no circumstances *individualisation* characterised solely the displaced population of West Bengal in post-partitioned times.

Frustrations of the refugees, particularly in early years after partition, knew no bounds to create mixed feelings amongst them. Very often the 'large masses of suffering, angrily bitter and hostile people' were met with in different refugee camps and settlements. But, in general such state of affair did not continue for long time in wedging a permanent social cleavage between the refugee-migrants and the sedentary, local people of India. Making practical adjustment with and healthy assimilation of discordant and competitive developments the displaced people could in large number of cases minimise their social distances from the local inhabitants. And this change-over was, (and is) definitely a time-consuming affair. After all we should not forget that 'they are not like the refugees from Europe to (our) American shores—people endowed with a great hope for new life—nor like the people escaping from Europe as refugees to Israel—people who are fulfilling a sort of ancestral destiny of their cultural and religious community—but rather a group of straggling sufferers trying to pull together the fragments of a life *lost*, and unable to do' (Murphy : 1953).

In India social problems of the refugees in general stood initially on that particular level where there was 'no clear goal, no clear plan of ultimate rehabilitation toward which they could aim'. Moreover, when 'the refugees cannot understand *why*, in this as in many other matters, they did not get the privileges they think belong to them *simply as citizens* of India' social problems of any description are bound to jeopardise all the beneficial measures of rehabilitation adopted by the administrators of the country. Social tensions naturally accumulated surreptitiously to give birth amongst the communal sufferers to a peculiar pattern of bitterness coupled with an overt psychological barrier. More they felt the stings of neglect, apathy and undervaluation in their post-migrational life, more the scope of offering to them 'some sort of definite emotional anchorage in life' met abjection. They had thought of themselves as Indians and not as refugees. They thought that both the Government and all those surrounding them would welcome them with 'open arms,' but in reality their experiences faced 'a form of degradation' which they never thought of before sacrificing ancestral homes and hearths for a greater cause of the Indians as a whole.

The refugees are the direct inheritors of the grim tragedies of Partition, yet their genuine feelings are not reciprocated by many. They have been patronised most frequently but no 'good, strong, and substantial help in defining a *new goal* and working toward it' has been offered to them ungrudgingly. It should not be the question of giving large and larger doles to the uprooted minorities from Pakistan; 'it is a question of a *new objective* toward which they can confidently work' (Murphy : 1953) and here lies the crux of refugee problems in India. The name of the displaced population is legion here; their social, psychological and economic problems are equally massive. In this situation social scientists have the moral responsibility to explain the relevant social facts which would be conducive to those matters of social policy with which politicians, administrators and social reformers of the country have to deal with in their respective field.

The sociological fact pertaining to the issue that 'the family has a dynamic function in being critical and selective and in making its own choices.....each family as a cultural unit, has an opportunity and a responsibility to develop a type of family according to its own aspirations and objectives' (Burgess and Locke : 1960), should be the guiding factor in

formulating the over-all social policy meant for the refugees of the country. This *creative aspect of the institution of the family* has to be given due cognizance to achieve appropriate solutions of those social problems with which the displaced population under study have had to start their post-migrational life and living in West Bengal or other places within India.

Problems of 'unsatisfactory integration' of the uprooted families from East Pakistan still loom large in the 'absorbing society' of West Bengal. To tackle the problems further sociological study is urgently needed to expose the pattern of 'interplay between the immigrants' own desires and expectations with regard to the new country, and the extent to which these can be realized in terms of the various demands made on the immigrants by the institutional structure of the absorbing society' (Eisenstadt : 1954). How far immigrants' desires and expectations and possible demands of the absorbing society are operating compatibly in this State? Have the displaced people set up meanwhile any new organisations culturally and psychologically oriented toward the absorbing society? Are the uprooted families and persons failing genuinely to mark 'mutual identification and cultural and educational compatibility' between themselves and the non-migrant, local people of West Bengal? Penetrating probe into the above basic questions has to be made before long in achieving satisfactory solutions of what goes in general by the term 'refugee-problems' of the State.

Cultural upbringing and social traits of the uprooted population, especially of the educated Hindus, require, indeed, a careful evaluation in understanding their mental make-up and familial expectations in the absorbing society at large of the country. They had and still have, certain definite motives and aspirations in the various spheres of social and economic activities which are, of course, oriented towards realisable achievement. Now, how far such aspirations and achievements oriented activities of the refugee population of the land have till today been given serious and humane attention in arranging relief and rehabilitation measures concerned? That the refugee problems still persist not too mildly in West Bengal (or in Eastern India in general) may be a sharp indicator of greater initial and expanding incompatibility between the displaced persons' needs, aspirations, and urges for a descent life and living and the receiving country's social and economic resources and demands. It seems that but for this incompatibility the uprooted mass from former East

Bengal society was (and is still) forced to maintain some 'separate cultural identity' in the 'institutional structure of the absorbing society' of West Bengal.

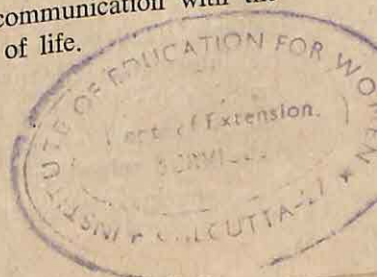
A constrained feeling is commonly met with among the displaced population as a whole when they become vocal about various discriminatory attitudes and practices which have so far been employed towards them by the bureaucratic circle and/or local non-migrant neighbours. Such feelings appear very reasonably to stand crucially in the way of their realizing their individual as well as family needs, aspirations and honourable resettlements. Under the circumstances, various 'manifestations of aggressive feeling' against an attitude of 'negative identification' with the prevailing socio-cultural values of the country of absorption become irresistible in many occasions. A socio-psychological cleavage becomes gradually deep to negate a smooth assimilation of the uprooted within the absorbing society of the host country. But, perhaps for this cleavage a successful equation of human values can yet to be achieved between a smaller group of refugee-migrants and the larger group of local, non-migrant inhabitants of West Bengal.

Persuant to the above it is further observed that 'cultural incompatibility' between the Bengali-speaking Hindu refugees from East Pakistan and the Bengali-speaking inhabitants of West Bengal is definitely not so great as to reduce them into two alien groups within the same cultural *milieu*. Rather, wherever and whenever the uprooted families and persons found (or find even today) it impossible to realize their desired levels of 'status-aspiration' and some degree of economic satisfaction they manifested negative identification, separate cultural dominance, aggressive feelings, parochial activities, or even organised movements for ensuring existence within the new society of the receiving State. But, existence are not at all lacking to show that wherever the scope of socio-cultural and economic interactions between the different groups of refugee-migrants and local non-migrants remains *not* limited by any pre-requisites there diminishes the possibility of lack of common identification, mutual social distance and fruitful reciprocity. Accordingly, the process of gradual but tension-free assimilation of the refugees in the wider societal framework of the people of West Bengal, or for that matter of Eastern India, has to be guided sociologically and *not* exclusively from economic and demographic point of view.

The political decision of division of India by the national

leaders of both Hindu and Muslim communities of the country had fundamentally been at the root of the motivation to migrate of the uprooted from Pakistan. Actual feeling of deep insecurity and inadequacy in their original society prompted necessarily the migrants to undergo a 'physical transition' from one social setting to another. In the case of the refugee-migrants of West Bengal almost a complete physical transition from their original society to a new one did involve extraordinarily. Motives and aspirations of the displaced families and persons were guided by the fact that they did not feel that their original society in the new Muslim State of East Pakistan (1946-47) was in a position to provide 'enough facilities for and possibilities of adaptation', i.e., they could not maintain 'a given level of physical existence' or 'ensure survival within it'. (Eisentadt : 1954). It was equally true that their forced migration was very frequently 'prompted by the feeling that certain goals, mainly instrumental in nature (e.g., economic or other satisfactions) cannot be attained within the institutional structure of their original society'. The objective situation under which Pakistanized Bengal came into being was such that the Hindu and other non-Muslim minorities had to feel at the cost of their blood and deprivations this social reality that within their original society they could never fully gratify their aspirations to solidarity, i.e., to complete mutual identification with other non-Hindus in innumerable cases.

In the sociological study of the process of migration from an old society and absorption by a new society relevant motives, aspirations, kinship characteristics and other socio-economic attributes of the refugees, as highlighted above, have to be given essentially top priority. To resolve satisfactorily the lingering 'refugee problems' of West Bengal we require indeed to go more deep into (i) the immigrant's motives for migration, (ii) his mental image of the new society and its mutual resemblance to his original society, (iii) his acceptance of the process of social change inherent in permanent displacement from his ancestral home, (iv) his total 'status image and set of values' in the absorbing society, and (v) his social participation beyond the primary group of family or caste and communication with the wider society providing him a new base of life.



CHAPTER 9

OFFICIAL STATISTICS ON THE INDIAN REFUGEES : AN ADDENDUM

The displaced persons of West Bengal are partition-born citizens of new Indian Republic but their becoming was not at all of their own accord. Some aspects of social behaviour of these displaced people with respect to their (a) mode of migration beyond erstwhile East Bengal as well as within West Bengal, (b) pattern of family organisation, (c) caste-influence, and (d) occupation-class have been discussed in previous chapters. In this specific task we have had to restrict utilisation of relevant statistical information available from the report of the *first survey* of the refugees of West Bengal (Chakravarti : 1949). But, this does never mean that we have any reason to depreciate the unique importance of all the facts and statistics given in the said report. Contextually it has been felt that in the best interests of the present study other important statistics which speak volumes by themselves about the uprooted mass of refugees should get here a place. By this attempt we would surely be in a better position to pick up a more wholesome view of the evicted people under reference. Hence, comes the need for the presentation of this addendum.

There is another point to be considered. Apart from the quantitative assessment made in 1948, important scientific investigations amongst the displaced population were carried out in subsequent years by the State Statistical Bureau, Government of West Bengal (1951) and the Census Authorities, Government of India (1951). These investigations yielded a rich mass of quantitative information about the displaced persons in the country. Though these statistics which are available for 1951 do not constitute any direct link with those that have especially been employed in the present study, yet they maintain always an intimate bearing with the uprooted people concerned. As a matter of fact, the experiences of 1948 combined with quantitative information of 1951 should profitably go a long way in depicting the actual state of affairs which the refugee-migrants had to face in West Bengal or in any other parts of India after their forced migration from East Pakistan.

Some important statistics available from the State Statistical

Bureau's Report as well as from the 1951 Census Report have been appended below. These statistics do reveal the socio-economic characteristics of the displaced persons as a *distinct group* in sharp contrast to the non-refugee population of West Bengal and India. Moreover, these statistics shall supply many supplementary facts and figures in building up relatively a *fuller* perspective of the displaced population as a whole.

Whatever we have discussed so far about the displaced persons does illuminate a crucial dimension related to their *family living* just after Partition-led migration. Nevertheless, quantitative information obtainable from other sources shall, of course, not be redundant to throw additional light on many essential, social, demographic and economic features of the same people. These features combined with those analysed in the present study are bound to expose a more realistic picture of the displaced families of West Bengal. Without having in the background a comprehensive knowledge of these features no sociological appraisal of the refugee-migrants can be fruitfully complete. Therefore, the quantitative data given in this addendum may be merited as some complementary *aid-materials* to the specific task undertaken in the discourse. Lastly, a plea is made that as the importance of this addendum coheres with that of the present study as a whole, it may not be treated in its independent entity.

Table A : Percentage distribution of migrants from Pakistan by occupations followed before migration and after migration.

occupation class	percent following occupations under Col. (1) before migration	percent following occupations under Col. (1) after migration	per capita annual income (Rs.) of migrants in W. Bengal after migration
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
agriculture	10.2	8.2	391
cottage industry	2.6	2.8	577
caste profession	1.4	1.2	595
learned profession	1.5	1.2	910
trade	5.7	4.8	877

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
skilled labour	0.1	0.1	955
unskilled labour	0.4	2.1	400
services	3.5	5.9	1034
other occupations	1.1	1.1	651
no occupation	73.5	72.6	—
all classes :	100.0	100.0	Rs. 722
(number of individuals)	(2143228)	(2143228)	

source : State Statistical Bureau (West Bengal) :
Report, 1951—Tables 16 and 18, pp. 38 & 40

Table B : Percentage distribution of refugee-migrant families by income group before and after migration.

income group (Rupees)	percent of families before migration	percent of families after migration
(1)	(2)	(3)
1 — 50	9.8	31.9
51 — 100	30.3	36.4
101 — 250	41.6	25.5
251 — 500	13.5	5.1
501 — 1000	3.5	0.9
above 1000	1.3	0.2
total	100.0	100.0
(no. of families).	(429272)	(429272)

source : State Statistical Bureau (West Bengal) :
Report, 1951, p. 9.

Table C: Percentage distributions of refugee earners and non-earners and migrant families by income-group over different districts of West Bengal.

West Bengal districts (1951)	percent- age of earners	percent- age of non- earners	percent of migrant families within income-group (in Pakistan)							total (per- centage and Rs. 1000 number)
			Rs. 1-50	Rs. 51-100	Rs. 101-250	Rs. 251-500	Rs. 501-1000	above centage and Rs. 1000 number)		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	
1. Burdwan	29.1	70.9	8.9	34.6	41.2	12.0	3.1	0.2	100.0(24616)	
2. Birbhum	23.3	76.7	32.2	12.3	38.3	14.8	1.2	1.2	100.0(2655)	
3. Bankura	19.3	80.7	—	29.9	29.9	29.9	10.3	—	100.0(2294)	
4. Midnapore	23.9	76.1	32.1	12.3	38.3	14.8	1.2	1.3	100.0(6058)	
5. Howrah	21.1	78.9	6.8	11.8	47.5	22.0	6.8	5.1	100.0(16827)	
6. Hooghly	22.3	77.7	8.0	18.4	44.8	21.6	5.6	1.6	100.0(12115)	
7. 24-Parganas	23.9	76.1	4.2	29.0	45.6	16.1	4.0	1.1	100.0(100564)	
8. Calcutta	22.3	77.7	11.8	19.1	42.4	18.7	5.7	2.3	100.0(76078)	
9. Nadia	31.5	68.5	9.3	37.6	41.8	8.2	2.1	1.0	100.0(84913)	
10. Murshidabad	32.2	67.8	4.9	33.0	48.1	11.0	1.6	1.4	100.0(14423)	
11. West Dinajpur	37.3	62.7	15.3	33.9	40.0	8.5	1.8	0.5	100.0(27305)	
12. Malda	33.5	66.5	13.0	53.1	28.8	4.3	0.8	—	100.0(14876)	
13. Jalpaiguri	31.0	69.0	13.0	33.8	38.3	12.3	2.0	0.6	100.0(20596)	
14. Darjeeling	28.9	71.7	5.9	19.1	42.6	22.1	10.3	—	100.0(3426)	
15. Cooch Behar	35.2	64.8	19.0	45.3	26.7	7.2	1.4	0.4	100.0(22526)	
16. all districts :	27.4	72.6	9.8	30.3	41.6	13.5	3.5	1.3	100.0(429272)	

Source : State Statistical Bureau (West Bengal) : Report, 1951—Tables 10 and 21, pp. 25 and 42

Source : State Statistical Bureau (West Bengal) : Report, 1951—Tables 10 and 21, pp. 25 and 42

A. GENERAL STATISTICS OF THE DISPLACED PERSONS OF INDIA, 1951

(Source : Census of India 1951—Paper No. 4 of 1954 :
Displaced Persons, 1951)

1. Total number of Displaced Persons enumerated in the 1951 Census operation :

In India :	Persons	7295870	100.0%
	Males	3900034	53.5
	Females	3395836	46.6
Displaced persons from EAST PAKISTAN	Persons	2549390	100.0%
	Males	1363805	53.5
	Females	1185585	46.5

2. Total number as well as number per 1000 Displaced Persons from different parts of Pakistan :

place of origin	number (in thousands)	number (per 1000)
Punjab (P)	3408	470
Sind	776	107
Elsewhere in West Pakistan	516	71
EAST PAKISTAN	2549	352

3. Yearly details of movement of the Displaced Persons from EAST PAKISTAN :

Year	number per 1000 displaced persons	
	during the year	upto the year
1946	23	23
1947	182	205
1948	193	398
1949	128	526
1950	459	985
rest upto Feb., 1951	15	1000

4. Proportion to General Population :

	Delhi	Pun- jab	Tri- pura	Chand- ernagar	Aj- mer	PEP- SU	West Ben- gal and Nico- bar	Anda- man
number of dis- placed persons per 1000 local population (other than displaced persons)	397	231	188	115	115	113	92	51

5. Literacy :

age-group	number per 1000 literate general population (other than displaced persons)	displaced persons
all ages : persons	158	373
<i>males</i>	235	462
<i>females</i>	76	272
age 10 & persons	198	429
above <i>males</i>	295	530
<i>females</i>	93	311

6. Age-structure :

age-group	number per 1000 in	
	general population	displaced persons
	33	7
0	102	57
1 — 4	248	270
5 — 14	174	211
15 — 24	156	166
25 — 34	119	117
35 — 44	85	84
45 — 54	50	51
55 — 64	22	25
65 — 74		

75 & above	10	11
age not stated	1	1
all ages :	1000	1000

7. Civil condition (Marital Status) :

marital status	number per 1000 in	
	general population	displaced persons
Unmarried	441	451
Married	470	469
Widowed or divorced	89	80
all status :	1000	1000

8. Livelihood class :

Livelihood class	number per 1000 persons	
	general popu- lation(exclu- sive of dis- placed persons)	displaced persons
<i>Agricultural class :</i>		
1. Cultivators with land and dependents	477	56
2. Cultivators without land and dependents	87	180
3. Cultivating labourers and dependents	127	43
4. Non-cultivating owners of land, rent receivers and dependents	16	9
<i>Non-Agricultural class :</i>		
1. Persons deriving livelihood from production other than cultivation	105	118
2. Persons having commerce	56	240
3. Persons having transport	16	43
4. Persons having other services	116	311
All classes :	1000	1000

B. GENERAL SOCIAL STATISTICS OF THE DISPLACED PERSONS OF WEST BENGAL, 1951

(Source : Census of India, 1951—Paper No. 4 of 1954 :
Displaced Persons, 1951)

1. Percentage distribution by year of arrival from East Pakistan only :

Area where migrated	Year of arrival						total (no. of migrants)
	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	
India	2.3	18.2	19.2	12.8	46.0	1.0	100.0(2549390)
East India	2.3	17.7	19.2	12.9	46.4	1.5	100.0(2523115)
West Bengal	2.1	18.3	20.2	13.2	44.7	1.5	100.0(2076338)

2. Total Displaced Persons in West Bengal, 1951 2104241
(100.0%)
- Percent migrating from West Pakistan only .. 0.5
- Percent migrating from places not definitely known .. 0.8
- Percent migrating from East Pakistan only .. 98.7
3. Percent migrating to rural areas only of West Bengal .. 49.9
- Percent migrating to urban areas only of West Bengal .. 50.1
4. Percent males in total displaced population .. 53.3
- Percent females in total displaced population .. 46.7
5. Percent literates in total displaced population .. 43.6
- Percent illiterates in total displaced population .. 56.4
6. Percent unmarrieds in total displaced population .. 48.6
- Percent marrieds in total displaced population .. 42.6
- Percent widowed and divorced in total displaced population .. 8.8
7. Percent cultivators and their dependents in total displaced population .. 8.1
- Percent share-croppers and their dependents in total displaced population .. 9.7
- Percent cultivating labourers and their dependents in total displaced population .. 5.4
- Percent non-cultivating persons and their dependents in total displaced population .. 0.5
- Percent depending upon production other than cultivation in total displaced population .. 15.8

Percent depending upon <i>commerce</i> other than cultivation in total displaced population	20.3
Percent depending upon <i>transport</i> other than cultivation in total displaced population	3.5
Percent depending upon other <i>services</i> other than cultivation in total displaced population	36.7
8. Percent children and youngs (upto 14 years) ..	33.5
Percent adults within working ages (15-64 years) ..	63.8
Percent old dependents (above 65 years)	2.6
Percent giving no age-records	0.1
9. Percent having <i>agricultural</i> livelihoods only in West Bengal	23.7
Percent having <i>non-agricultural</i> livelihoods only in West Bengal	76.3
10. Percentage distribution of Displaced Persons in various livelihood classes by age-group :	

age-group	livelihood classes								Total (number of individuals)
	cultivator	share-cropper	cultivating labourer	non-cultivat- ing land owners	production other than cultivation	commerce	transport	other services	
0	7.6	11.0	5.6	0.6	13.3	17.3	3.2	41.3	100.0(16272)
1-14	8.3	9.6	5.2	0.5	14.1	21.0	3.4	37.9	100.0(686983)
15-24	7.3	8.6	4.6	0.4	18.4	20.6	4.3	35.8	100.0(484034)
25-34	8.0	9.8	5.9	0.3	17.0	20.8	3.7	34.5	100.0(359473)
35-44	8.6	11.0	6.5	0.4	15.2	19.3	2.9	36.1	100.0(243357)
45-64	8.8	10.8	5.9	0.5	14.5	18.5	3.2	37.8	100.0(257935)
65+	9.5	10.1	4.3	0.5	14.1	19.8	3.5	38.2	100.0(54859)
age not known	7.7	14.7	10.4	0.1	7.2	10.2	1.5	48.2	100.0(1329)
all ages :	8.1	9.7	5.4	0.5	15.8	20.3	3.5	36.7	100.0(2104241)

11. Percentage distribution of Displaced Persons by marital status and age group :

age-group	marital status						total
	unmarried male	unmarried female	married male	married female	widowed and divorced male	widowed and divorced female	
0	1.3	2.1	—	—	—	—	0.8
1 — 4	11.1	10.1	—	—	—	—	6.9
5 — 14	43.7	63.1	0.3	4.0	0.1	0.5	25.8
15 — 24	33.7	14.1	10.6	36.4	3.1	5.3	23.0
25 — 34	8.3	1.1	31.8	30.0	12.6	13.5	17.1
35 — 44	1.2	0.3	27.1	16.9	18.3	19.8	11.6
45 — 54	0.4	0.1	16.7	8.5	20.9	24.6	7.5
55 — 64	0.1	—	9.0	3.3	22.5	21.4	4.6
65 — 74	0.2	0.1	3.3	0.7	13.5	10.1	1.8
75 +	—	—	1.1	0.2	8.7	4.7	0.8
age not known	—	—	0.1	—	—	—	0.1
all ages:	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(no. of persons):	(628372)	(393180)	(459268)	(437718)	(33573)	(152130)	(2104142)

12. Percentage distribution of Displaced Persons by marital status and place of settlement :

Place of settlement	Marital status						Total (no. of persons)
	Unmarried male	Unmarried female	Married male	Married female	Widowed and divorced male	Widowed and divorced female	
Rural areas	27.0	17.0	23.7	22.4	2.0	7.9	100.0 (1049659)
Urban areas	32.7	20.4	20.0	19.2	1.2	6.5	100.0 (1054582)
All areas	29.9	18.7	21.8	20.8	1.6	7.2	100.0 (2104241)

13. Percentage of distribution of Displaced Persons by sex and place of settlement :

Place of settlement	Sex		Total
	male	female	
Rural areas	52.6	47.4	100.0 (1049659)
Urban areas	53.9	46.1	100.0 (1054582)
All areas	53.3	46.7	100.0 (2104241)

14. Percentage distribution of Displaced Persons by sex, literacy and place of settlement :

Place of settlement	Male literate	Male illiterate	Female literate	Female illiterate	Total (no. of persons)
Rural areas	18.9	33.8	7.9	39.4	100.0 (1049659)
Urban areas	37.3	16.6	23.0	23.1	100.0 (1054582)
All areas	28.1	25.2	15.5	31.2	100.0 (2104241)

15. Livelihood pattern in general population and displaced population per 10,000 of population :

Livelihood class	Livelihood pattern					
	General population			Displaced population		
	total	rural	urban	total	rural	urban
1. Owner cultivator	3234	4242	177	816	1543	90
2. Share-cropper	1201	1574	71	976	1908	42
3. Landless agricultural labour	1226	1599	95	538	1034	42
4. Proprietor, rent receiver, non-cultivating owner of land	60	56	74	46	31	61
5. Production other than cultivation	1536	1099	2865	1576	1076	2076
6. Commerce	932	440	2420	2024	1081	2966
7. Transport	305	97	934	356	133	580
8. Other services and miscellaneous services	1507	893	3364	3668	3194	4143

APPENDIX : A

The All India Muslim League at its Lahore Session in March, 1940 passed the following resolutions :

1. While approving and endorsing the action taken by the Council and the Working Committee of the All India Muslim League, as indicated in their resolutions dated the 7th of August, 17th and 18th of September and 22nd of October, and 3rd of February 1940 on the constitutional issue; this Session of the All India Muslim League emphatically reiterates that the scheme of federation embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935, is totally unsuited to, and unworkable in the peculiar conditions of this country and is altogether unacceptable to Muslim India.

2. It further records its emphatic view that while the declaration dated the 18th of October 1939, made by the Viceroy on behalf of His Majesty's Government is reassuring in so far as it declares that the policy and plan on which the Government of India Act 1935, is based, will be reconsidered in consultation with the various parties, interests and communities in India, Muslim India will not be satisfied unless the whole constitutional plan is reconsidered *de novo* and that no revised plan would be acceptable to the Muslims unless it is framed with their approval and consent.

3. Resolved that it is the considered view of this Session of the All India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principles, viz. that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial adjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in North-Western and Eastern Zones of India should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States' in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.

4. That adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specifically provided in the constitution for minorities in these units and in these regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them; and in other parts of India where the Musalmans are in a minority, adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specially provided

in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them.

(quoted from Rajendra Prasad's *India Divided*, 1946, p. 199)

APPENDIX : B

The following is the full text of the Announcement of the Statement of His Majesty's Government commonly known as the 3rd June Plan, on which the Partition of India and the Transfer of Power to the Dominions of India and Pakistan were based.

STATEMENT BY HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

INTRODUCTION

1. On February 20th, 1947, His Majesty's Government announced their intention of transferring power in British India to Indian hands by June 1948. His Majesty's Government had hoped that it would be possible for the major parties to co-operate in the working-out of the Cabinet Mission's Plan of May 16th, 1946, and evolve for India a Constitution acceptable to all concerned. This hope has not been fulfilled.
2. The majority of the representatives of the Provinces of Madras, Bombay, the United Provinces, Bihar, Central Provinces and Berar, Assam, Orissa and the North-West Frontier Province, and the representatives of Delhi, Ajmer-Merwara and Coorg have already made progress in the task of evolving a new Constitution. On the other hand, the Muslim League Party, including in it a majority of the representatives of Bengal, the Punjab and Sind as also the representative of British Baluchistan, has decided not to participate in the Constituent Assembly.
3. It has always been the desire of His Majesty's Government that power should be transferred in accordance with the wishes of the Indian people themselves. This task would have been greatly facilitated if there had been agreement among the Indian political parties. In the absence of such agreement, the task of devising a method by which the wishes of the Indian people can be ascertained has devolved upon His Majesty's Government. After full consultation with political leaders in India, His Majesty's Government have decided to adopt for this purpose the plan set out below. His Majesty's Government wish

to make it clear that they have no intention of attempting to frame any ultimate Constitution for India; this is a matter for the Indians themselves. Nor is there anything in this plan to preclude negotiations between communities for a united India.

THE ISSUES TO BE DECIDED

4. It is not the intention of His Majesty's Government to interrupt the work of the existing Constituent Assembly. Now that provision is made for certain Provinces specified below, His Majesty's Government trust that, as a consequence of this announcement, the Muslim League representatives of these Provinces, a majority of whose representatives are already participating in it, will now take their due share in its labours. At the same time, it is clear that any Constitution framed by this Assembly cannot apply to those parts of the country which are unwilling to accept it. His Majesty's Government are satisfied that the procedure outlined below embodies the best political method of ascertaining the wishes of the people of such areas on the issue whether their Constitution is to be framed :

- (a) in the existing Constituent Assembly; or
- (b) in a new and separate Constituent Assembly consisting of the representatives of those areas which decide not to participate in the existing Constituent Assembly.

When this has been done, it will be possible to determine the authority or authorities to whom power should be transferred.

BENGAL AND THE PUNJAB

5. The Provincial Legislative Assemblies of Bengal and the Punjab (excluding the European members) will, therefore, each be asked to meet in two parts, one representing the Muslim majority districts and the other the rest of the Province. For the purpose of determining the population of districts, the 1941 census figures will be taken as authoritative. The Muslim majority districts in these two Provinces are set out in the appendix to this Announcement.

6. The members of the two parts of each Legislative Assembly sitting separately will be empowered to vote whether or not the Province should be partitioned. If a simple majority of either part decides in favour of partition, division will take place and arrangements will be made accordingly.

7. Before the question as to the partition is decided, it is desirable that the representative of each part should know in

advance which Constituent Assembly the Province as a whole would join in the event of the two parts subsequently deciding to remain united. Therefore, if any member of either Legislative Assembly so demands, there shall be held a meeting of all members of the Legislative Assembly (other than Europeans) at which a decision will be taken on the issue as to which Constituent Assembly the Province as a whole would join if it were decided by the two parts to remain united.

8. In the event of partition being decided upon, each part of the Legislative Assembly will, on behalf of the areas they represent, decide which of the alternatives in paragraph 4 above to adopt.

9. For the immediate purpose of deciding on the issue of partition, the members of the Legislative Assemblies of Bengal and the Punjab will sit in two parts according to Muslim majority districts (as laid down in the appendix) and non-Muslim majority districts. This is only a preliminary step of a purely temporary nature as it is evident that for the purposes of a final partition of these Provinces a detailed investigation of boundary questions will be needed; and, as soon as a decision involving partition has been taken for either Province, a Boundary Commission will be set up by the Governor-General, the membership and terms of reference of which will be settled in consultations with those concerned. It will be instructed to demarcate the boundaries of the two parts of the Punjab on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims. It will also be instructed to take into account other factors. Similar instructions will be given to the Bengal Boundary Commission. Until the report of a Boundary Commission has been put into effect, the provisional boundaries indicated in the appendix will be used.

SIND

10. The Legislative Assembly of Sind (excluding the European members) will at a special meeting also take its own decision on the alternatives in paragraph 4 above.

NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

11. The position of the North-West Frontier Province is exceptional. Two of the three representatives of this Province are already participating in the existing Constituent Assembly. But it is clear, in view of its geographical situation, and other

considerations, that if the whole or any part of the Punjab decides not to join the existing Constituent Assembly, it will be necessary to give the North-West Frontier Province an opportunity to reconsider its position. Accordingly, in such an event, a referendum will be made to the electors of the present Legislative Assembly in the North-West Frontier Province to choose which of the alternatives mentioned in paragraph 4 above they wish to adopt. The referendum will be held under the aegis of the Governor-General and in consultation with the Provincial Government.

BRITISH BALUCHISTAN

12. British Baluchistan has elected a member, but he has not taken his seat in the existing Constituent Assembly. In view of its geographical situation, this Province will also be given an opportunity to reconsider its position and to choose which of the alternatives in paragraph 4 above to adopt. His Excellency the Governor-General is examining how this can most appropriately be done.

ASSAM

13. Though Assam is predominantly a non-Muslim Province, the district of Sylhet which is contiguous to Bengal is predominantly Muslim. There has been a demand that, in the event of the partition of Bengal, Sylhet should be amalgamated with the Muslim part of Bengal. Accordingly, if it is decided that Bengal should be partitioned, a referendum will be held in *Sylhet district under the aegis of the Governor-General and in consultation with the Assam Provincial Government to decide whether the district of Sylhet should continue to form part of the Assam Province or should be amalgamated with the new Province of Eastern Bengal, if that Province agrees. If the referendum results in favour of amalgamation with Eastern Bengal, a Boundary Commission with term of reference similar to those for the Punjab and Bengal will be set up to demarcate the Muslim majority areas of Sylhet district and contiguous Muslim majority areas of adjoining districts, which will then be transferred to Eastern Bengal. The rest of the Assam Province will be in any case continue to participate in the proceedings of the existing Constituent Assembly.*

REPRESENTATION IN CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLIES

14. If it is decided that Bengal and the Punjab should be partitioned, it will be necessary to hold fresh elections to choose their representatives on the scale of one for every million of population according to the principle contained in the Cabinet Mission's Plan of May 16th, 1946. Similar elections will also have to be held for Sylhet in the event of it being decided that this district should form part of East Bengal. The Number of representatives to which each area would be entitled is as follows :

Province	General	Muslims	Sikhs	Total
Sylhet District	.. 1	2	nil	3
West Bengal	.. 15	4	nil	19
East Bengal	.. 12	29	nil	41
West Punjab	.. 3	12	2	17
East Punjab	.. 6	4	2	12

15. In accordance with the mandates given to them, the representatives of the various areas will either join the existing Constituent Assembly or form the new Constituent Assembly.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

16. Negotiations will have to be initiated as soon as possible on the administrative consequences of any partition that may have been decided upon :

- (a) Between the representatives of the respective successor authorities about all subjects now dealt with by the Central Government, including Defence, Finance and Communications.
- (b) Between different successor authorities and His Majesty's Government for treaties in regard to matters arising out of the transfer of power.
- (c) In the case of Provinces that may be partitioned, as to the administration of all provincial subjects such as the division of assets and liabilities, the police and other services, the High Courts, Provincial institutions, etc.

THE TRIBES OF THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER

17. Agreements with tribes of the North-West Frontier of India will have to be negotiated by the appropriate successor authority.

THE STATES

18. His Majesty's Government wish to make it clear that the decisions announced above relate only to British India and that their policy towards Indian States contained in the Cabinet Mission Memorandum of 12th May 1946 remains unchanged.

NECESSITY FOR SPEED

19. In order that the successor authorities may have time to prepare themselves to take over power, it is important that all the above processes should be completed as quickly as possible. To avoid delay, the different Provinces or parts of Provinces will proceed independently as far as practicable within the conditions of this Plan. The existing Constituent Assembly and the new Constituent Assembly (if formed) will proceed to frame Constitutions for their respective territories: they will of course be free to frame their own rules.

IMMEDIATE TRANSFER OF POWER

20. The major political parties have repeatedly emphasized their desire that there should be the earliest possible transfer of power in India. With this desire His Majesty's Government are in full sympathy, and they are willing to anticipate the date of June, 1948, for the handing over of power by the setting up of an independent Indian Government or Governments at an even earlier date. Accordingly, as the most expeditious, and indeed the only practicable way of meeting this desire, His Majesty's Government propose to introduce legislation during the current session for the transfer of power this year on a Dominion Status basis to one or two successor authorities according to the decisions taken as a result of this announcement. This will be without prejudice to the right of the Indian Constituent Assemblies to decide in due course whether or not the part of India in respect of which they have authority will remain within the British Commonwealth.

FURTHER ANNOUNCEMENT BY GOVERNOR-GENERAL

21. His Excellency the Governor-General will from time to time make such further announcements as may be necessary in regard to procedure or any other matters for carrying out the above arrangements.

APPENDIX

The Muslim majority districts of the Punjab and Bengal according to 1941 census.

1. THE PUNJAB :

Lahore Division—Gujranwala, Gurdaspur, Lahore, Sheikh-pura, Sialkot.

Rawalpindi Division—Attock, Gujrat, Jhelum, Mianwali, Rawalpindi, Shahpur.

Multan Division—Dera Ghazi Khan, Jhang, Lyallpur, Montgomery, Multan, Muzaffargarh.

2. BENGAL :

Chittagong Division—Chittagong, Noakhali, Tippera.

Dacca Division—Bakerganj, Dacca, Faridpur, Mymensingh.

Rajshahi Division—Bogra, Dinajpur, Malda, Pabna, Rajshahi, Rangpur.

Presidency Division—Jessore, Murshidabad, Nadia.

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE,
NEW DELHI

APPENDIX : C

THE INDIAN INDEPENDENCE ACT, 1947

An Act to make provision for the setting up in India of two independent Dominions, to substitute other provisions for certain provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935, which apply outside those Dominions, and to provide for other matters consequential on or connected with the setting up of those Dominions, [18th July 1947].

Be it enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows :

THE NEW DOMINIONS

1. (1) As from the fifteenth day of August, nineteen hundred and fortyseven, two independent Dominions shall be set up in India, to be known respectively as India and Pakistan.

(2) The said Dominions are hereafter in this Act referred to as 'the new Dominions' and the said fifteenth day of August is hereafter in this Act referred to as 'the appointed day'.

TERRITORIES OF THE NEW DOMINIONS

2. (1) Subject to the provisions of subsections (3) and (4) of this section, the territories of India shall be the territories under the sovereignty of his Majesty which, immediately before the appointed day, were included in British India except the territories which, under subsection (2) of this section, are to be the territories of Pakistan.

(2) Subject to the provisions of subsection (3) and (4) of this section, the territories of Pakistan shall be —

- (a) the territories which, on the appointed day, are included in the Provinces of East Bengal and West Punjab, as constituted under the two following sections;
- (b) the territories which, at the date of the passing of this Act, are included in the Province of Sind and the Chief Commissioner's Province of British Beluchistan; and
- (c) if, whether before or after the passing of this Act but before the appointed day, the Governor-General declares that the majority of the valid votes cast in the referendum which, at the date of the passing of this Act, is being or has recently been held in that behalf under his authority in the North-West Frontier Province are in favour of representatives of that Province taking part in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, the territories which, at the date of the passing of this Act, are included in that Province.

(3) Nothing in this section shall prevent any area being at any time included or excluded from either of the new Dominions, so, however, that —

- (a) no area not forming part of the territories specified in subsection (1) or, as the case may be, subsection (2), of this section shall be included in either Dominion without the consent of that Dominion; and
- (b) no area which forms part of the territories specified in the said subsection (1) or, as the case may be, the said subsection (2), or which has after the appointed day been included in either Dominion, shall be excluded from that Dominion without the consent of that Dominion.

(4) Without prejudice to the generality of the provisions of subsection (3) of this section, nothing in this section shall be construed as preventing the accession of Indian States to either of the new Dominions.

BENGAL AND ASSAM

3. (1) As from the appointed day —

- (a) the Province of Bengal, as constituted under the Government of India Act, 1935, shall cease to exist; and
- (b) there shall be constituted in lieu thereof two new Provinces, to be known respectively as East Bengal and West Bengal.

(2) If, whether before or after the passing of this Act, but before the appointed day, the Governor-General declares that the majority of the valid votes cast in the referendum which, at the date of the passing of this Act, is being or has recently been held in that behalf under his authority in the District of Sylhet are in favour of that District forming part of the new Province of East Bengal, then, as from that day, a part of the Province of Assam shall, in accordance with the provisions of subsection (3) of this section, form part of the new Province of East Bengal.

(3) The boundaries of the new Provinces aforesaid and, in the event mentioned in subsection (2) of this section, the boundaries after the appointed day of the Province of Assam, shall be such as may be determined, whether before or after the appointed day, by the award of a boundary commission appointed or to be appointed by the Governor-General in that behalf, but until the boundaries are so determined —

- (a) the Bengal Districts specified in the First Schedule to this Act, together with, in the event mentioned in subsection (2) of this section, the Assam District of Sylhet, shall be treated as the territories which are to be comprised in the new Province of East Bengal;
- (b) the remainder of the territories comprised at the date of passing of this Act in the Province of Bengal shall be treated as the territories which are to be comprised in the new Province of West Bengal; and
- (c) in the event mentioned in subsection (2) of this section, the District of Sylhet shall be excluded from the Province of Assam.

(4) In this section, the expression 'award' means, in relation to a boundary commission, the decisions of the Chairman of that commission contained in this report to the Governor-General at the conclusion of the commission's proceedings.

SHORT TITLE

This Act may be cited as the Indian Independence Act, 1947.

SCHEDULES

FIRST SCHEDULE

BENGAL DISTRICTS PROVISIONALLY INCLUDED IN THE NEW PROVINCE OF EAST BENGAL

In the Chittagong Division, the districts of Chittagong, Noakhali and Tippera.

In the Dacca Division, the districts of Bakarganj, Dacca, Faridpur and Mymensingh.

In the Presidency Division, the districts of Jessore, Murshidabad and Nadia.

In the Rajshahi Division, the districts of Bogra, Dinajpur, Malda, Pabna, Rajshahi and Rangpur.

SECOND SCHEDULE

DISTRICTS PROVISIONALLY INCLUDED IN THE NEW PROVINCE OF WEST PUNJAB

In the Lahore Division, the districts of Gujranwala, Gurdaspur, Lahore, Sheikhupura and Sialkot.

In the Rawalpindi Division, the districts of Attock, Gujrat, Jhelum, Mianwali, Rawalpindi and Shahpur.

In the Multan Division, the districts of Dera Ghazi Khan, Jhang, Lyallpur, Montgomery, Multan and Muzaffargarh.

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